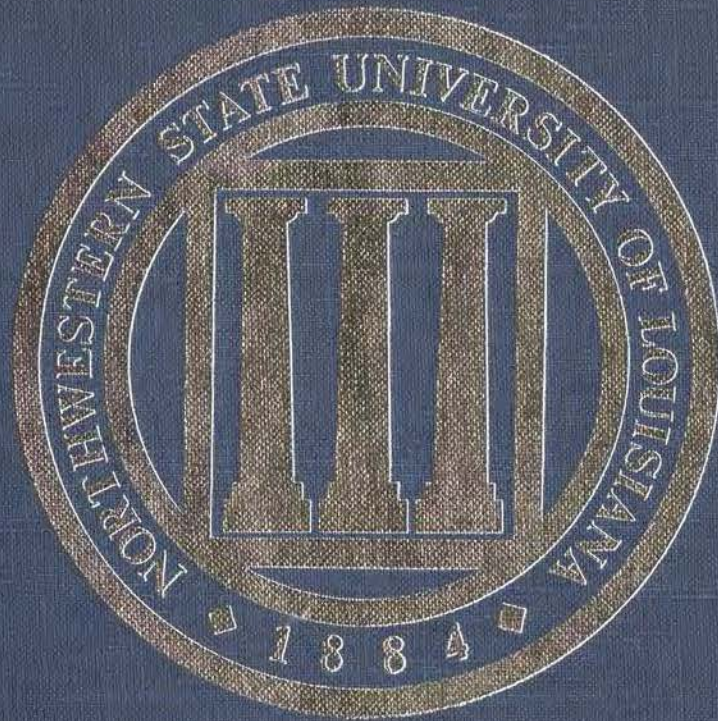


NORTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY



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NORTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY
OF LOUISIANA
1884-1984



NORTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY
OF LOUISIANA
1884-1984: A HISTORY

By
Marietta M. LeBreton



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To my parents and other friends
of higher education in Louisiana

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M.M. LeBreton

Foreword

FOREWORD

A historian must possess a special kind of hindsight to create a narrative history rather than a mere compilation of facts and details that are a part of history. Like Epimetheus, the historian must have 20/20 vision looking backward that not only discerns facts, figures and events but also aligns them in relative position one to the other, elucidating their interrelatedness, clarifying their uniqueness, and bringing into focus the milieu of which they are a part.

Recreating the history of a state university is a demanding task for the historian. People, programs and politics are prime variables in the process, and they are constantly changing. Each has an impact and is important to the institution's history. For a while, whether a short period or long, an individual president through his administration becomes the spotlight which illuminates the history of the institution during his time. And the spotlight reflects back on the man, highlighting his strengths and shortcomings and indelibly identifying his role in the history of the institution.

Dr. Marietta LeBreton has done an outstanding job of researching and recreating the history of the first one hundred years of Northwestern State University and has developed a flowing narrative that regenerates the lives and times of people and events of the university's history. The resultant book is an important contribution to the scholarship on American higher education. While relating the birth of Northwestern as a post-reconstruction era Normal School, whose first home was a former private mansion and later a Catholic convent, and tracing its evolution as a teachers college, general purpose state college, and regional university, Dr. LeBreton has provided us with more than the specific history of Northwestern State University. She has given students of higher education an exceptional work of scholarship on the evolution of one of the unique institutions of the world, the American regional multi-purpose publicly supported university.

The counterparts of Northwestern State University exist in every state of our union. The history of most, beginning with the first one established by Horace Mann in Massachusetts in 1839, share a common genesis and evolution. Different people in different places experiencing different events make up the specific histories of each of the several hundred regional state universities that exist today. However, there is a generic commonality that identifies them as being part of a larger whole.

Dr. LeBreton's book beautifully portrays the uniqueness of Northwestern State University, its deep roots in southern tradition and the politics of its becoming and being. At the same time, the author develops the model which is the generic American regional state university. In both the book is successful and makes an important contribution to the literature of higher education.

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The schools which evolved from the early American Normal schools have a proud history of service to the American public. They have become known as "people's colleges and universities" because of the access to higher education that they provided to the citizens of our country and because of the strong influence their graduates have had as teachers and members of the business and professional communities of our nation.

Northwestern shares in this proud heritage of service. Particularly in the field of teacher education, it has held a place of preeminence in terms of service to Louisiana, the south, and the nation. In the past few decades, its sphere of influence has extended far beyond the preparation of large numbers of teachers and administrators for our public schools. Its College of Nursing is recognized as a leader in nursing education, and the graduates of its business, science and arts, and other programs have gone on to distinguish themselves and bring credit to their alma mater.

Justifiable pride is taken in the accomplishments and contributions of Northwestern State University during the first century of existence. There is strong confidence that this tradition of service and accomplishment will grow and continue to benefit the people whom the university is committed to serve. The university stands firmly and proudly on the foundation of its first century and looks to the future inspired by its tradition of excellence in teaching, research, and service.

Joseph J. Orze

Introduction

INTRODUCTION

The history of higher education in the United States is the story of three thousand different colleges and/or universities. Each has its own special character. Some are large while others are small; many find their roots in religious movements and others are nonsectarian; a substantial number are private, but the great majority are public; there are two-year colleges, four-year colleges, graduate colleges, and as many kinds of professional schools as there are professions. Distinctions among institutions are as numerous as the institutions themselves. Yet, in spite of this vast diversity, colleges and universities have had a profound impact on the development of our country. The history of the United States is inexorably interwoven with the history of its institutions of higher learning. Thomas Jefferson, ever the sage, knew this when he wrote:

I think by far the most important bill in our whole [Virginia] code is that for the diffusion of knowledge among the people. No other sure foundation can be devised for the preservation of freedom. . . .

Academe has sent and continues to send into the world businessmen, physicians, attorneys, journalists, engineers, scientists, nurses and, indeed, representatives of every discipline known to mankind. But in terms of numbers and in terms of importance, the production of teachers outranks them all. Mr. Jefferson knew that not every citizen would benefit from a university education. He did recognize, however, that every citizen was entitled to a basic education that, in turn, would make for a literate society capable of governing itself. This goal would be accomplished through the creation of thousands of local, public school systems staffed by hundreds of thousands of college-trained teachers.

How and where would these teachers be trained? Faced with a similar challenge following the French Revolution, France founded a set of institutions called *écoles normale* dedicated exclusively to the education and training of elementary and secondary school teachers. (*Normale* used in this context means the norms or standards to be applied in teaching.) Based on the French model, the first American "normal school" was founded in Massachusetts in 1839. For the next one hundred years, the vast majority of elementary and secondary teachers and school administrators in the United States were graduates of normal schools.

By the 1860s at least one normal school was functioning in nearly every northern state. The South, with its overwhelmingly rural population and plantation-based economy, was unprepared to join the normal school movement in the *ante-bellum* years. The Civil War, followed by more than a decade of debilitating reconstruction, further delayed the South's re-entry into the mainstream of American higher education. Meanwhile, the normal schools of the North had become prestigious institutions representing the cutting edge of collegiate training in the field of teacher education. The clearly successful example of normal schools in the North

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and the burgeoning need for teachers in a recovering South finally led to the establishment of similar institutions in the states of the old Confederacy. Louisiana established its State Normal School at Natchitoches, Louisiana, in 1884.

Higher Education in the United States has come a long way since the founding of the first normal school in 1839, and higher education in Louisiana has come a long way since the founding of Northwestern State University (*née* State Normal School) in 1884. Throughout the nineteenth century and at least the first half of the twentieth, normal colleges were prestigious institutions serving an important need. In the "pecking" order of state systems of higher education, they were surpassed in importance only by the major state research universities. But by mid-century, fundamental changes were taking place in American society that would threaten the very foundations of normal colleges. The United States was rapidly becoming a post-industrialized society. Teacher training remained the choice of many veterans attending college on the G.I. Bill, but a growing trend in favor of engineering, business, science, technology, and other professions was strongly evident. The academic choices being made by students were mere reflections of economic reality. Some normal colleges responded successfully to the needs and demands of their students and society; others were unable or unwilling to do so. The postwar "baby boom" further exacerbated the dilemma faced by the normals. Parents, interested in minimizing costs, began pressing their elected state officials and legislators to allow other colleges to offer teacher education programs. (Actually, this trend predates World War II, but it gained increased momentum in the postwar years.) Thus, most normal colleges were forced to share their formerly unique commodity: degrees in professional education. Community leaders, also citing the persuasive statistics created by the "baby boom," called for the construction of new colleges in their locales. Some of these new institutions of higher learning were built in proximity to existing normal colleges and all would offer teacher education programs. Finally, the normal colleges were established by well-meaning individuals who believed that the best place to educate college-age students was as far away as possible from populous, metropolitan areas. Almost without exception, normal schools were located in rural settings, away from large cities and the temptations which might corrupt young, innocent students. Population growth and shifts in population notwithstanding, many colleges whose origins can be traced to normal schools still find themselves situated in isolated areas away from major population centers. Thus, in the absence of a local population base on which to build a new foundation, the position of many former normal colleges has been further eroded.

By and large, the difficulties that have beset the old normal colleges in the second half of the twentieth century are not of their making. There is, however, no solace to be found in that observation. How these venerable bastions of learning deal with these problems will determine their destiny for the remainder of this century and the next. It is my prognosis that these institutions, blessed as they are with

Introduction

a great history of service and strong traditions of scholarship and learning, will continue to play a vital — albeit altered — role in American higher education.

William Arceneaux, Commissioner of Higher Education
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

"A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION"

The year 1884 suggested a bright future for Louisiana which less than a decade earlier had emerged from the suffering and turmoil of Reconstruction. Overwhelming social, economic, and political rebuilding still faced the state but on the horizon sparks of change and hope flickered. In New Orleans the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition exemplified and heightened Louisiana's interest in economic change and development. The excitement and activity of the fair reigned supreme throughout the city and southern Louisiana. In northwest Louisiana an even more significant, but less noticed, event was taking place. There a small town, Natchitoches, experienced the establishment of the first state-supported teacher-training institution in the state. The State Normal School, as it would be called, became the keystone for preparing an educated citizenry upon which the future of the state depended. A new era was dawning for education, and progress in general, in Louisiana.

Although not particularly supported by many Democratic leaders for a multitude of political, economic, and racial reasons, interest in improving Louisiana's fledgling public school system, which had been smoldering since before the Civil War, emerged militant on the floor of the legislature during the session of 1884. On June 16 Judge William Seay, a representative from Shreveport, introduced a bill to establish a state normal school. With the vigorous support of Representatives Leopold Caspari of Natchitoches, E.A. Casidy of Robeline, Senator J. Fisher Smith of Many, Attorney General Milton J. Cunningham, also of Natchitoches, and others, Act 51 became law and was signed by Governor Samuel D. McEnery on July 7, 1884.¹ The legislation authorized the establishment of a State Normal School "for the benefit of such white persons of either sex, of suitable age and mental qualifications, as may desire and intend to teach in the public schools of Louisiana."² No state appropriations were to be expended for the construction, lease or purchase of buildings for the school, nor was any particular site mandated. Instead, the State Board of Education was directed "to select a town, city or village . . . taking into consideration its healthfulness, convenience of access and the liber-

¹*Official Journal of the Proceedings of the House of Representatives of the State of Louisiana at The Regular Session, Begun and held in the City of Baton Rouge, May 12, 1884* (Baton Rouge, 1884), 243 and 394; *Official Journal of the Proceedings of the Senate of the State of Louisiana at The Regular Session, Begun and held in the City of Baton Rouge, May 12, 1884* (Baton Rouge, 1884), 297-98; Otis R. Crew, "History of Northwestern State College of Louisiana" (typewritten), 8; *An Historical Sketch of Louisiana State Colleges* (Baton Rouge, 1960), I, 30-31.

²"An Act to establish a State Normal School, and to provide for its administration and support," *Acts Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana At The Regular Session, Begun and held at the City of Baton Rouge, on the twelfth day of May, 1884* (Baton Rouge, 1884), 60.

ality of the inhabitants in furnishing the buildings, or the means of erection thereof."³ Thus there occurred a scramble among Louisiana towns vying for the location of the new school.

The State Board of Education invited each parish to propose a site for the normal school. The towns of Fillmore in Bossier Parish, Greenwood in Caddo Parish, Homer in Claiborne Parish, New Orleans in Orleans Parish, and Natchitoches in Natchitoches Parish submitted proposals. On October 6, 1884, the Honorable Leopold Caspari so effectively presented the Natchitoches petition that the town was unanimously selected by the State Board. Captain Caspari, a super salesman, in collaboration with H.B. Walmsley, drew up a proposition describing Natchitoches:

We present to the State . . . the buildings and grounds occupied for many years, by 'The Convent of the Sacred Heart,' which we do not think can be surpassed for the purposes of a large educational institution, by any place in the State.

The buildings consist of one large frame college with class and recitation rooms, chapel, etc., ample in number and size; one large brick convent, with, we think, about thirty-six rooms, and a neat little residence formerly occupied by the priest, besides all necessary out buildings.

These buildings have a plentiful supply of chimneys to insure warmth in winter and are well ventilated. There are seven large ground cisterns guaranteeing an abundant supply of cool water for all purposes.

We think the buildings have accommodated [*sic*] about two hundred pupils, mostly boarders.

The grounds consist of about forty acres of land, more or less, partly alluvial, under cultivation, and partly on the hill, around and back of the buildings, most of the hill land being uncleared.

There are shade trees, in abundance, many pecan, and some fruit trees.

The buildings are on the hill, commanding a fine view of the Cane River valley, and presenting a fine view for many miles down the river.

Just in front of the grounds is a pretty clear water, still lake, formed by a dam across Old River, and fed by springs, affording a fine boating course, and well supplied with fish, and within a mile to the rear, is a lake a few miles in area, affording plenty of fish and game in proper seasons. . . .

At Natchitoches, the hills come up to the river; there are no local causes for sickness, and the health of the place is as good as any in the State.

It is fairly accessible by river and by rail, and when the tap is completed, which is expected very soon, it will be very convenient of access, from all portions of the State.

³Ibid., 62.

It is about the centre of the northwestern portion of the State, in which there are no public institutions; its past history and present importance entitle it to the consideration of the State.⁴

Compliance with the three requirements of healthfulness, easy access, and available buildings was clearly emphasized in the Natchitoches petition. Interestingly, the convent site had not yet been acquired by the town, but Captain Caspari assured the board that it would be if the Natchitoches petition were accepted.

The Honorable Leopold Caspari, better known as Captain Caspari, was a native of France who immigrated to the United States in 1848. He settled in Cloutierville for ten years and then moved to Natchitoches where he engaged in farming and business. In 1861 he entered Confederate service and subsequently rose to the rank of captain. After the war he resumed his business pursuits which included the presidency of a railroad company designed to connect Natchitoches with the main line of the Texas and Pacific railway at Cypress. In 1884 he was elected to represent Natchitoches, Sabine and DeSoto parishes in the State legislature.⁵ Captain Caspari knew his Natchitoches people well and his faith in them was not misplaced. Quickly the mayor, town council, school board, police jury, other public officials, and the townspeople banded together to raise five thousand dollars to purchase the hundred-acre convent site with buildings.⁶ Neighboring Shreveport and Alexandria congratulated the small rural town on its coup in obtaining the state educational institution.⁷

Undoubtedly the exuberant spirit of the Natchitoches people and their leaders was a deciding factor in the location of the new school. However, the town also had a most desirable site to offer. The original settlement of Natchitoches developed on a narrow strip of land between the Red River (now Cane River Lake) and higher land to the west. Gradually the village expanded to include some of the higher land. At an early date, the southernmost projection of this land formed a

⁴*Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education To The General Assembly, 1884-1885* (Baton Rouge, 1886), ix; Extracts from the Minutes of the Meeting of the State Board of Education, 6 October 1884, University Archives, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana; Extracts from the Minutes of the State Board of Education, 6 October 1884, in "Documentary History of the Original Site of Northwestern State College of Louisiana" (typewritten), 158-64.

⁵John Oliver Pettis, "Development of the Louisiana State Normal College, 1884-1927" (M.A. thesis, Louisiana State University, 1927), 1-2. Leopold Caspari served nearly thirty years as a member of the state legislature, first as a representative and later as a senator. Because of his lifelong efforts to promote the interests of the State Normal School, he was called "The Father of the Normal." At age eighty-five, he died March 12, 1915, in his home in Natchitoches. The entire student body of the State Normal School attended the funeral services. *Current Sauce*, March 25, 1915.

⁶*Report of the Board of Administrators of the Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La. To The General Assembly, 1890* (New Orleans, 1890), 19. Actually the convent site included two tracts of land totaling 95.05 acres. "Documentary History," 165-68. The earlier Natchitoches petition of Caspari and Walmsley had referred to only one tract which included 45.05 acres.

⁷*Shreveport Times*, October 7, 1884; *Alexandria Louisiana Democrat*, October 9, 1884.



Captain Leopold Caspari

A Step in the Right Direction

part of the personal property of Louis Juchereau de St. Denis, the French officer who founded Natchitoches and commanded the fort there until his death in 1744. At that time and later the area was dotted with Indian habitations and villages.⁸ After several changes in ownership, the land was obtained by Charles Adams Bullard and his wife, Julia Ann Bludworth Wiley Bullard. The couple had married March 31, 1829, and two years later Charles purchased a tract of land fronting Red River from the succession sale of the property of Aime Rouquier, wife of James Bludworth, for three hundred dollars. Less than a year later he sold it to Bernard Leonard, the husband of Ann Bludworth, his wife's aunt. In 1840, after the death of her husband, Bernard, Ann Bludworth Leonard gave "in consideration of the love and affection which she entertains for her niece Mrs. Julia Ann Bludworth, wife of Charles Adams Bullard" the 49.05 tract of land south of the town of Natchitoches. "... the said property so by her given shall belong exclusively to said Julia Ann Bludworth."⁹ At the same time Charles Bullard disposed of some other property belonging to his wife for his personal use and in turn transferred to her all the buildings and improvements on the Red River tract valued at \$12,625.54. Obviously still having financial problems, in 1847 Charles moved his legal residence from Natchitoches and the next year Julia Bullard sold the Red River property to James Taylor.¹⁰ In 1854 Julia petitioned for a separation of her property from that of her husband because he was "in embarrassed circumstances, and in order to place her affairs in security to guard against all future difficulties & misapprehension..."¹¹ In the meantime, James Taylor died and at a succession sale of his property in 1850 the Reverend Auguste Martin purchased a tract of land along the Red River consisting of 45.05 acres including buildings and improvements. In turn, on April 23, 1856, Father Martin sold the land to Madam Antoinette Bullion, Superior of the Academy of the Sacred Heart in Natchitoches, for \$2,500.¹²

While the Red River tract, which later became a part of the site of the State Normal School, was in the hands of the Bullards, the couple built a very impressive mansion on their high ground. Constructed in 1832, the mansion faced eastward to overlook the Red River's floodplain and principal channel, now Chaplin's Lake. The Bullard mansion was a striking example of Greek revival architecture. A live oak avenue led from the river up to the two and one-half story home. Four massive round stuccoed columns rose twenty-six feet from their four-foot bases to support the east gable. Over the elaborate paneled doorway nestled a little balcony. The interior of the mansion was spacious but of a simple layout. A twelve-foot hall

⁸Ross Phares, *Cavalier in The Wilderness* (Baton Rouge, 1952), 185-6; Hiram F. Gregory, *et al.*, *Natchitoches Parish Cultural & Historical Resources (History)*, 1-27.

⁹"Documentary History," 26-27, 30-34, 45-56.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 47-49, 50, 55-57.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 51-54.

¹²*Ibid.*, 69-71, 75-77. In the succession sale of Taylor's property the tract of land was reduced from 49.05 acres to 45.05 acres.

extended from the front doorway through the building to a spiral stairway leading to the second floor and attic. On the ground floor there were four rooms including two parlors, one on each side of the hall, for entertaining visitors. A small private chapel for family use was located behind the south parlor. The other rooms of the first floor as well as those of the second were used for living quarters. The second story rooms were designed much like those of the first story while the third story or attic consisted of one immense rectangular room where the Bullard family held parties, dances, and church affairs.¹³ One Normalite later described the building as "Beauty and dignity from outside appearance — huge columns, wide galleries, Juliet balcony, lovely trees, commanding position at brow of Normal 'Hill,' enormous jug cistern — all made an [sic] powerful and lasting first appearance. . . ."¹⁴

When the Bullard mansion and land was acquired by the Religious of the Sacred Heart from Bishop Auguste Martin in 1856, the sisters were no strangers to Natchitoches. Earlier Bishop Antoine Blanc of New Orleans, whose diocese included the entire state of Louisiana, agonized that there was not a single Catholic school north of Baton Rouge. This distressing situation worried Bishop Blanc so he appealed to the Religious of the Sacred Heart to open a school in Natchitoches. Pleas from the town's residents, who even purchased land and a fine old colonial mansion for the school, supported the Bishop's urgent request. In May 1847 the Sisters agreed to go to Natchitoches where they established the first Catholic school in north Louisiana with six pupils. Their arrival was met with crowds of curious townspeople and planter families with their slaves who lined the street to get a glimpse of the nuns. The school flourished until by 1850 it consisted of a two-story house and an adjoining day school accommodating one hundred pupils. A three-story addition was erected to house a chapel, assembly room and student dormitories.¹⁵ Lestan Prudhomme, a young Creole gentleman whose sisters and cousins attended the school, provided glimpses of life at the academy.

The establishment is spacious, the study rooms are large, the dormitories comfortable and orderly and adorned with neat and good beds, the play grounds vast, everything well calculated to promote the happiness and comfort of those lovely creatures that are there to be secluded from the world, till they come out to be the pride and glory of society.¹⁶

¹³J.E. Guardia, "The Bullard Mansion" in "The Fiftieth Anniversary of The Act of the Legislature Establishing The Louisiana State Normal School, 1884-1934" (typewritten); Crew, "Northwestern State College," 5.

¹⁴Dean Varnado to Miss Mamie Bowman (Mrs. D.T. Tarleton), Tarleton Collection, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana.

¹⁵Roger Baudier, *The Catholic Church in Louisiana* (New Orleans, 1939), 362; Louise Callan, *The Society of The Sacred Heart in North America* (New York, 1937), 493-94; *Natchitoches Enterprise*, February 14, 1956.

¹⁶Callan, *Society of The Sacred Heart*, 496.

After a summer of parties, dinners, horseback riding, and dances with the young ladies from the academy who were on vacation, young Prudhomme lamented:

On the first of September the youthful beauties, our jewels, our sweet little doves, took their flight towards the town of Natchitoches, there to enter the Convent and remain imprisoned for one long year, to the great regret of their numerous friends and relations, of which I am one. The beginning of school was not very triumphant, nor to the satisfaction of the nuns . . . for the nuns have rebuked them, upon their return to the convent, for having danced the waltz during vacation — and that with their parents' consent! And for a little harmless diversion, the girls must now go about bathed in tears.¹⁷

In 1850 the nuns received what was perhaps the greatest boost to their endeavors in Natchitoches — the appointment of Reverend Auguste Martin as pastor of St. Francis church and Vicar-general representing Bishop Blanc in north Louisiana. Father Martin was determined that the nuns' school would survive and grow. In 1853 Father Martin became Bishop Martin of the newly created diocese of Natchitoches comprising all of north Louisiana with Natchitoches serving as the see city. Even with the enthusiastic support of the local bishop, life was not easy for the nuns nor was the success of their school assured. In 1853 and 1854 yellow fever broke out in Natchitoches striking down several of the religious and the following year the sisters, along with the town's other residents, suffered from an eight-month drought which caused misery, devastation, and famine. By November, 1855, the Religious of the Sacred Heart decided to close their Natchitoches convent but Bishop Martin pleaded with them not to abandon the children of the diocese. Again the Sisters heeded the bishop's urgent request and continued their teaching duties. In appreciation of their dedicated work and as an encouragement to stay in Natchitoches, in 1856 Bishop Martin ceded to the Sisters for the site of a new and expanded convent the Red River property.¹⁸

Excitedly in 1857 the Ladies of the Sacred Heart moved their convent to the new country site on the edge of town. The Bullard Mansion needed few modifications to house its new guests temporarily. The parlors and chapel on the first floor were left as they were while other rooms, as well as those of the second and third floors, served as quarters for the cloistered nuns. Within a year an additional school building, later known as the Convent Building, was erected next to the mansion overlooking Red River. The two and one-half story red brick structure was circled on three sides with lower and upper galleries supported by twenty-six-foot pillars. These galleries provided 860 feet of covered walkway for the religious and their students. The interior design of the building was spacious but simple. Two wide

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 497.

¹⁸Roger Baudier, *The Catholic Church*, 403-4; "Documentary History," 75-77; Callan, *Society of The Sacred Heart*, 498-500.



Bullard Mansion and Convent Building

halls intersected at right angles creating four rooms: a study hall, classroom, dining room, and music room. The second and third floors had similar, but smaller, rooms and halls and provided living quarters for the boarding students. Additionally, the third floor contained cells, or tiny austere bedrooms, for the nuns. Near the school building was a small structure which served as a combined kitchen and bathing hall. It contained a number of old fashioned bathtubs in curtained-off compartments where the girls enjoyed, or perhaps more accurately suffered through, baths with water heated in kettles and brought in by attendants.¹⁹

Not only the buildings but the entire layout of the grounds faced eastward towards Chaplin's Lake, then the principal channel of the Red River. The driveway led to the front gate on the lake while the present university main entrance served as a back gate. From the rear of the school buildings a cedar and pine avenue led to a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary called "Our Lady of the Piney Woods" where each evening the students assembled to pray. To the side of the statue was a little cemetery where five or six nuns were buried.²⁰ In 1866 the Religious of the Sacred Heart acquired an additional fifty-acre tract of land to the south and west of the original site. This increased the area of the convent grounds to approximately one hundred acres.²¹

The grounds and buildings of the convent bustled with the daily activities of the nuns and students. The Religious of the Sacred Heart were divided into two categories: the Ladies, usually called Madames, who were the teachers and the Sisters who performed housekeeping duties. The majority of the students, whose ages ranged from five to nineteen, were boarders from nearby towns. The girls wore

¹⁹J.E. Guardia, "The Sacred Heart Convent, 1846-1875, Natchitoches, La." in "Fiftieth Anniversary;" Crew, "Northwestern State College," 5-7.

²⁰Guardia, "The Sacred Heart Convent;" Crew, "Northwestern State College," 6.

²¹"Documentary History," 151-54.

simple uniforms of blue dresses with white cuffs and collars. At one time a boarding student paid as much as three hundred dollars for a ten-month session. This sum included all necessary expenses except clothing. The day of a convent student was a full and regimented one. Aroused by a bell at 6:00 in the morning, the girls dressed quickly, especially on winter days since their rooms were without heat, attended Mass at 7:00, breakfast at 7:30, classes from 8:00 to noon, dinner at noon, classes from 1:00 to 5:30, supper at 6:00 and bedtime at 7:00. The daily routine was rigid and tedious especially since strict silence was observed except during recesses before and after noon. These recesses provided needed relaxation for the girls who happily gathered outside to play and talk. Every Wednesday the students were treated to a walk in the piney woods and occasionally to an exciting visit to the observatory on top of the Convent building where the heavens could be studied.²²

Despite the idyllic location of their convent, the Religious of the Sacred Heart and their charges could not escape the deprivations of the Civil War and the resulting hard times of the post-war years. The Ladies kept their school open during the war years despite the loss of many students whose families could not pay the fees. To aid these unfortunate students, the nuns reduced the cost of boarding for a ten-month session to sixty dollars and accepted payment at five dollars a month. Still the enrollment declined. An added burden for the Ladies was the difficulty of bringing necessary supplies, especially food, through the federal lines from south Louisiana. Stale bread and coffee substitutes replaced the prewar abundance on the dining tables of the school.²³ At one point the war, itself, came dangerously close to the convent. During the Red River campaign of 1864, federal troops under Colonel Victor Vifquin occupied Natchitoches temporarily. The colonel suspected that ammunition, and perhaps Confederate fugitives, were hidden in the convent buildings. Placing his guns in the American Cemetery, he trained them on the school buildings and sent a note to the Mother Superior demanding the right to conduct a thorough search of the buildings. The Mother Superior immediately complied by hoisting a white flag on the observatory of the school building and preparing the girls for the experience of a federal search party. Despite her warnings to remain calm and conduct themselves properly, the girls excitedly cried, "Yankees! Yankees! Come see the Yankees!" when Colonel Vifquin and his men rode onto the school grounds. No ammunition or fugitives were found, but the Mother Superior felt obligated to apologize to the colonel for the rudeness of her girls and to punish them appropriately.²⁴

²²Guardia, "The Sacred Heart Convent."

²³Ibid.; Baudier, *Catholic Church*, 432.

²⁴Guardia, "The Sacred Heart Convent;" Carol Wells, Ezra Adams, and Don Sepulvado, *Cane River Country, Louisiana* (Natchitoches, 1979), 47; Mary Silverius Karnowski, "Natchitoches During The Civil War and Reconstruction Period." (M.A. thesis, Catholic University of America, 1949), 55.

The convent days have provided Northwestern with one version of its most persistent tradition — the Ghost of Normal Hill. The story involved a beautiful young French girl who was very popular with the opposite sex. Among her many suitors was one whom she loved above all others, but unfortunately he was killed in a questionable duel of honor. The grief-stricken young lady grew pale and withdrawn as she mourned the death of her lover. Seeking solitude she entered the convent at Natchitoches as a student and remained there to become a nun. The years passed and the sorrowing nun remained secluded even from the other members of her order. At night she would walk beneath the tall trees that grew near the convent. Some said she was crazy; others that she went there to meet the spirit of her lover. When the wind rustled the leaves of the trees gently people would say, "The Little Nun sighs for her lover," but when the wind blew fiercely they said, "The Little Nun has quarreled with her lover." The day following a violent storm, the Little Nun was found dead in her room with a knife beside her and a bloody handprint on the wall where she grasped as she fell. When the convent building was torn down, tradition has it, the ghost of the Little Nun moved to East Hall and after its demolition, to the Music building, then to Caldwell Hall and after its destruction by fire, to what is now called the old Women's Gym. The ghost always inhabited the oldest building on campus which today would still be the old Women's Gym. The ghost of Normal Hill has been the source of many pranks at the college down through the years.²⁵

The Religious of the Sacred Heart struggled for ten years after the end of the war to keep their school open, but the poverty and economic disruption of Reconstruction proved too great an obstacle to overcome. Finally, in September 1875, the nuns closed the doors of their Natchitoches school permanently. Early the next year, they boarded a steamboat at Grand Ecore bound for New Orleans amid a number of sorrowing friends and supporters who had gathered to see them off.²⁶ Once again silence shrouded the halls of learning on the hill overlooking Red River.

For almost ten years after the departure of the nuns, the buildings and grounds of the old convent were unoccupied and deteriorated rapidly until its selection in October 1884 as the site for the recently authorized State Normal. The administration of the new school was under the direction of a Board of Administrators consisting of "five competent white citizens . . . from the city in which the school is located. . . ."²⁷ They were appointed by the State Board of Education for four-year terms and received no compensation for their services. The duties of the administrators were to "elect all teachers . . . , determine their compensation, and manage the financial and other interests of the school."²⁸ E.E. Buckner, H.B. Walmsley,

²⁵Ora Garland Williams, "Normal's Ghost Story," in "Fiftieth Anniversary."

²⁶Baudier, *Catholic Church*, 441; Crew, "Northwestern State College," 7-8.

²⁷"An Act to establish a State Normal School," *Acts Passed by the General Assembly, 1884*, 61.

²⁸*Ibid.*

T.P. Chaplin, L. Caspari, and D. Pierson were appointed as the first Board of Administrators. These gentlemen met on October 27, 1884, at Buckner's office in Natchitoches and organized themselves by electing D. Pierson president, T.P. Chaplin secretary, and H.B. Walmsley treasurer.²⁹ Two days later the board met again to consider what would be their most important decision — the selection of a suitable person as president of the school. State Superintendent of Public Education Warren Easton attended the meeting and was requested by the board to communicate with educators interested in applying for the position. The administrators authorized Superintendent Easton to offer a salary of two thousand dollars annually and living quarters on campus. After a month of searching, the board offered the presidency to Colonel S.H. Lockett of the State University who immediately declined it because of a previous commitment.³⁰ Another month passed before the administrators offered the presidency again. Their choice this time was Dr. Edward Ernest Sheib of Baltimore, Maryland, who had been highly recommended by Superintendent Easton. Dr. Sheib immediately accepted but other faculty selections were deferred until after his expected arrival in January 1885.³¹

Meanwhile, the board involved itself with the mundane tasks of readying the buildings and grounds for the opening of school. Fences and privies had to be repaired, grounds cleared, and buildings prepared for the reception of students. Fortunately, the ladies of Natchitoches had raised almost one thousand dollars to repair the buildings since the board immediately encountered fiscal problems.³² The State had appropriated six thousand dollars per annum out of the general fund for the support of the Normal School, but these funds were to be paid in equal monthly installments upon the warrant of the president of the Board of Administrators.³³ Immediate monies were scarce and it was not until the end of January 1885 that the administrators hired a maintenance person to perform necessary work at the school "at a salary not exceeding fifteen dollars monthly. . . ."³⁴

²⁹Minutes, Board of Administrators, State Normal School of Louisiana (typewritten), 1, University Archives, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana. Cited hereafter as A.D., E.P.W.M.L., NSU.

³⁰*Ibid.*, 1-2. Samuel Henry Lockett was a West Point graduate who joined the Confederate cause during the Civil War. In 1867 he was appointed to the "Chair of Engineering and Commandant of Cadets" at Louisiana State Seminary at Pineville where he remained six years. During that time he made a topographical survey and map of Louisiana. Resigning his position in 1873 for economic reasons, Lockett directed several schools in Alabama, spent time as an engineer in Egypt, and finally accepted a professorship in Engineering and Mathematics at the University of Tennessee. Around 1884 Lockett entered private enterprise and dropped out of public view. He died at Bogota, Colombia, in 1891. Samuel H. Lockett, *Louisiana As It Is: A Geographical and Topographical Description of the State*. Ed. by Lauren C. Post (Baton Rouge, 1969), vii-x.

³¹Minutes, Board of Administrators, 2, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., NSU.

³²*Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education, 1884-1885*, 190.

³³"An Act to establish a State Normal School," *Acts Passed by the General Assembly, 1884*, 61-62.

³⁴Minutes, Board of Administrators, 2-3, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., NSU.

Despite the delays in selecting a president of the institution and the financial difficulties encountered, the State Normal School was a reality. State Superintendent Warren Easton recognized the significance of these slight beginnings when he stated, "This is the most important educational movement that has occurred in this State in years, and is a step in the right direction. Much had to be done, much has already been accomplished. Today the Normal is a living creature, at work, laboring for the future of your State."³⁵ Superintendent Easton was prophetic in his observation. A step, even though a faltering one, had been taken "in the right direction" toward progress in Louisiana's educational system.

³⁵*Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education, 1884-1885*, ix.

"LIGHT FROM ABOVE DOWNWARDS"

The opening of the State Normal School at Natchitoches was part of a larger normal school movement that was sweeping across the United States in the late nineteenth century. Although the first teacher training institutions were of European origin, originating in France and maturing in Germany, it was imperative that such institutions accompany the common school philosophy and practice of the United States. If free public schooling was to be available to all American children, then professionally trained teachers were needed to staff the common schools. In the early history of teacher education in the United States three chronological periods can be identified: (1) 1600-1789, (2) 1789-1860, and 1860-1910. In the first period there was little interest in public education and correspondingly less in teacher education. The second period, 1789-1860, experienced the beginnings of state public school systems and the first normal schools while the third, the years from 1860-1910, encountered the growth of elementary and secondary schooling, the expansion of normal schools, the origins of teachers' colleges, and teacher training in liberal arts colleges and universities.¹

Within this historical framework, the first state supported normal (from the Latin word, *norma*, meaning rule or standard) school was established at Lexington, Massachusetts, in 1839. Others soon followed in the New England and Middle Atlantic States and, with migration west of the Alleghenies, the normal school movement rapidly invaded the midwestern states. However, by 1860 there were still only twelve state normal schools in the nation and these, along with other normals and schools, trained only a small percentage of teachers.² It was not until the forty years following the Civil War that the normal schools found acceptance among the people and became as recognized a part of the American educational structure as the system of free public schools itself.³ By 1910 there were 264 normal schools enrolling about 132,000 students. Of these, 151, with an enrollment of ninety-four thousand were state normal schools while the rest were city, county, or private normals.⁴

Many of the normal schools in their early years were shaped by the educational background, interests, and ideals of their presidents. This was true of the Louisiana State Normal School and its first president Dr. Edward E. Sheib. Edward

¹C.A. Richardson, Hélène Brûlé, and Harold E. Snyder, *The Education of Teachers in England, France and the U.S.A.* (Paris, 1953), 225.

²*Ibid.*, 228-30; David Nasaw, *Schooled to Order: A Social History of Public Schooling in the United States* (New York, 1979), 62.

³Charles A. Harper, *A Century of Public Teacher Education* (Washington, 1939), 97.

⁴Richardson, Brûlé, and Snyder, *Education of Teachers*, 233.

Ernest Sheib was born March 17, 1850, in Baltimore, Maryland, to Henry and Lisetta D. (Eisenbrandt) Sheib.⁵ Henry Sheib was German-born and educated in theology at the universities of Bonn and Utrecht. After completing his studies at Utrecht, the young minister, feeling that he could not remain in Germany because of its repressive political situation, immigrated to New York City. In 1835 he received a call from Zion German Church in Baltimore which he immediately accepted and where he remained for over fifty years as pastor. There his five children were born.⁶

His son, Edward Ernest, attended a common school, spent four years at Loyola College, a Jesuit institution in Baltimore, and finally graduated from Georgetown College in Washington, D.C., in 1871. That year young Edward went to Europe to study theology at Heidelberg at the urging of his parents. Finding ministerial studies not his vocation, he left Heidelberg after a year to enroll at the University of Leipzig where he pursued the study of philosophy and pedagogy. After three years he received the Ph.D. degree from Leipzig. During his European studies, Edward also spent time in the university at Jena and visited parts of Germany, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Holland, and England during vacations. His European sojourn was ended in 1876 when he was called home because his father was critically ill.⁷ Returning to Baltimore, he served as principal of a large graded school until called to Natchitoches to organize the State Normal School.⁸

Dr. Sheib was a brilliant educator and a prolific and recognized scholar of his day. During his studies in Europe, he was influenced by Johann Friedrich Herbart's ideas through Professor Tuiskon Ziller at Leipzig.⁹ The Herbartian system, which gave "scientific precision to instruction and moral training by founding them upon an adequate system of psychology and ethics,"¹⁰ permeated the thought and writings of Dr. Sheib. In a paper on "The Function of the Normal School in our Educational System" he stated that the object of education was "the

⁵Edward E. Sheib, Vita in *The Public Schools in the United States of America: Inaugural Dissertation Zur Erlangung der philosophischen Doctorwürde an der Universität Leipzig* (Baltimore, 1877), Sheib Collection, Melrose Collection, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana. Cited hereafter as A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; John Oliver Pettis, "Development of the Louisiana State Normal College, 1884-1927" (M.A. thesis, Louisiana State University, 1927), 4.

⁶"Fifty Years a Pastor: Dr. Sheib's Golden Jubilee," a newspaper clipping, dated September 20, 1885, in Sheib Album, Sheib Collection, Melrose Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁷Sheib, Vita in *The Public Schools*, Sheib Collection, Melrose Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; "Professor E. Sheib Dies After a Gallant Struggle," *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, March 29, 1903.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Charlie E. Russell, "Edward E. Sheib, President, 1885-1888" in "The Fiftieth Anniversary of The Act of the Legislature Establishing The Louisiana State Normal School, 1884-1934" (typewritten); Pettis, "Development of Louisiana State Normal College," 4.

¹⁰Quoted in Homer Hurst, *Illinois State Normal University And The Public Normal School Movement* (Nashville, 1948), 65. In 1892 American followers of Herbart founded the Herbart Club, later the National Herbart Society.

formation of intelligent men and women with wills capable of obeying the dictates of conscience. . . ." He also lamented the demise of rational educational theory in favor of practice or experience. "While elsewhere the world was putting forth new forms, the school which (ought to) program for life, lay encrusted in the bias, (in) dust covered (garments) and (in) moth-eaten methods of ages (which had) long since passed away." Sheib argued that philosophy, psychology, and ethics were the foundations of the "science and art of teaching." The mission of the normal school, he stated, was to prepare teachers "to educate true men and women to human dignity and to the appreciation of talents and forces, harmoniously developed."¹¹ In a speech to the teachers of Louisiana on "Normal Schools," Sheib warned "Brick and mortar, books and charts do not make schools. The teacher, and the teacher only, is the life and soul of schools." Again referring to the object of education, he exclaimed "The question is not whether our boys and girls know more when they leave school . . . [but] whether morally and intellectually they are better men and women." Professor Sheib also cautioned that the normal school was not just a high school since it required the students to demonstrate proficiency in the common branches of knowledge upon entering and skill in the art of teaching upon graduating. "It combines a theoretical with a practical department just as the medical school. . . ."¹²

With his excellent educational background and idealist conception of the mission of the normal school, Dr. Edward Sheib eagerly accepted the presidency of the State Normal School at Natchitoches in December 1884. Immediately he was beset with the almost insurmountable problems of creating a school out of a wilderness. Natchitoches was not Baltimore and the Louisiana people were not as supportive of education as those on the east coast. In fact, from the beginning of his administration, President Sheib was greeted with prophecies of gloom such as "The failure of the Normal School is regarded a foregone conclusion" and "A Normal School, it is doomed to fail."¹³ Disregarding such negativism, President Sheib and the Board of Administrators plunged into the immediate work of organizing the first session. Although the bill establishing the State Normal directed that the school course be divided into two years, it prohibited a preparatory department. It also set a six month annual session with the opening day the first Tuesday of November and the closing day the last Thursday of April of each year. The faculty was to consist of the president and such additional teachers as needed and resources allowed.¹⁴

¹¹Edward E. Sheib, "The Function of the Normal School in our Educational System," Sheib manuscript, Melrose Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹²Edward E. Sheib, "Normal Schools," speech to the Teachers of Louisiana, Melrose Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹³*Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education To The General Assembly, 1884-1885* (Baton Rouge, 1886), 193.

¹⁴"An Act to establish a State Normal School, and to provide for its administration and support," *Acts Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana At The Regular Session, Begun and Held at the City of Baton Rouge, on the twelfth day of May, 1884* (Baton Rouge, 1886), 61.

Bending these legislative guidelines slightly, the president and Board of Administrators decided to open the Normal the first Monday of March 1885, for a short two month session. Obviously the gentlemen felt it vital to the success of the school to open it without delay and with proper public notice. Notwithstanding their efforts, the Normal School did not open in March 1885. There was too little time to hire assistant teachers, too little financial support because of the non-payment of state warrants, and too few applicants, twenty-seven, for admission to such a short session. However, during the summer of 1885, the faculty, consisting of President Sheib and Professor Charles Mc. D. Puckette, did conduct teachers' institutes at prominent localities throughout the state.¹⁵ The teachers' institutes were also mandated by Act 51. "In addition to the regular work of the session of the school, the faculty shall be required to hold, each year, at least three teachers' institutes, of not less than two weeks each, at different points in the State. . . ."¹⁶ These summer institutes, designed to train and update teachers already in the classrooms, constituted, perhaps, the most significant work of the early Normal School. They became a permanent and expanding feature of the Normal's early efforts to upgrade Louisiana's public schools.

¹⁵Minutes, Board of Administrators, State Normal School of Louisiana (typewritten), 3, University Archives, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana. Cited hereafter as A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Education, 1884-1885*, 188-89.

¹⁶"An Act to establish a State Normal School," *Acts Passed by the General Assembly, 1884*, 61.



Despite the additional months of preparation the delayed opening of the Normal provided, conditions were not remarkably improved for a successful session in the fall of 1885. President Sheib wrote later that the Normal School opened in 1885 in a "half-ruined building surrounded by a wilderness of thorns and trees . . . without desks, without benches, without books and black boards, with the rain pouring through the broken roof, and the wind sweeping through halls that could not be closed."¹⁷ Perhaps he had forgotten his admonition that "Brick and mortar, books and charts do not make schools."¹⁸ At this time faculty unrest also emerged. Professor Puckette refused to obey the directives of President Sheib, even after being ordered to do so in writing by the Board of Administrators. Therefore, on October 30, the board cancelled the selection of Mr. Puckette and proceeded to engage Professor Earle Grace and Miss Nettie Rouseau as faculty members. They were hired effective November 1, 1885, with Professor Grace receiving twelve hundred dollars and Miss Rouseau eight hundred dollars in annual salary.¹⁹ In general, the financial outlook of the Normal was bleak. The state appropriation of three thousand dollars in warrants for six months of 1884 had yielded only \$2,010 when sold while the six thousand dollar appropriation for 1885 netted about four thousand dollars. Fortunately through the exertions of Professor Sheib, Superintendent Warren Easton, and Judge Manning of the Peabody Board, the State Normal received two thousand dollars for salaries and one thousand dollars for the teachers' institutes from the Peabody fund.²⁰ This donation significantly alleviated the financial distress of the Normal during its first year.

The bright spot in the opening of Normal on November 3, 1885, was the sixty students who enrolled. Consisting of forty-five young ladies and fifteen young gentlemen, they represented thirteen Louisiana parishes, with the largest number, thirty-eight, from Natchitoches Parish. President Sheib was very pleased that seventeen students, or about 30 percent, had been teachers from one to ten years. The enrolling of teachers, he felt, "may be regarded as one of the most favorable indications of a marked progress in our schools in the near future. . . ."²¹ President Sheib was also complimentary of the moral character and proper decorum of the Normal students, remarking that in no case had the students abused the liberties and responsibilities conferred upon them.²²

President Sheib presided over two more annual openings of the Normal, those of 1886 and 1887, before he left the school. In his three years at the helm of the

¹⁷*Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education To the General Assembly, 1886-1887* (Baton Rouge, 1888), 206.

¹⁸Edward E. Sheib, "Normal Schools," Melrose Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁹Minutes of the Board of Administrators, 5-6, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Education, 1884-1885*, 189.

²⁰*Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Education, 1884-1885*, 190-91.

²¹*Ibid.*, 197-98.

²²*Ibid.*, 197.

Normal he continued to encounter frustrations and difficulties attendant to the founding of a new institution. To a certain extent these disappointments resulted from President Sheib's own naivete in underestimating the obstacles and resistance he would encounter from people unconvinced of the value of public education and from students inadequately prepared for normal school. On the other hand, some of the early problems sprang from the physical location of the school, especially its isolation from other cultural and educational centers. Still other obstacles arose from defects in Act 51 creating the Normal School which led to strife between the president and his faculty and especially between the president and the Board of Administrators.

In a letter to Superintendent Warren Easton in April 1888, President Sheib vented the disappointments and frustrations of his three years at Natchitoches. The "want of sympathy with an institution which represented ideas that fell with a ring of strangeness upon the ears of those for whose benefit it was created . . . made the work of the first years arduous and perplexing,"²³ he wrote. Although Dr. Sheib consistently tried to sell the purposes and ideas of the Normal School to the public, his efforts fell short of success and were, in his own words, "a thankless occupation."²⁴

The president also commented at length on the unpreparedness of the Normal students in the common branches of knowledge. He noted that within a radius of fifty to a hundred miles of the Normal School there was no public graded school, grammar school, or high school. The only schools in the area were seminaries at Mansfield and Keachi and some private institutions. Thus the Normal students were woefully unprepared to pursue a course in professional teacher training. Yet, the act establishing the Normal prohibited a preparatory department. Disregarding this restriction, President Sheib established lower classes which in reality were a preparatory department. He argued that only by these means could students be prepared for true Normal work.²⁵ However, the president bitterly observed that the lower classes were filled with local Natchitoches students whose parents were only seeking a free education and not with students interested in the teaching profession. He noted that few local students went on into the Normal department. ". . . of the 23 or 25 graduates sent out since the organization of the school, only three were from the town or vicinity of Natchitoches and two of these had been teaching previous to the establishment of the State Normal School."²⁶ Although

²³ *Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Education, 1886-1887*, 206.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 207.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 207-8.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 208, 212-13. President Sheib reported that of the 146 students in the school 109 were from Natchitoches and thirty-six from other parishes. However, in the Normal classes, composed of juniors and seniors engaged in teacher preparation, there were thirty-one students of whom only six were from Natchitoches and twenty-five from other parishes and states. These parishes included Morehouse, Sabine, Ascension, Assumption, Iberia, Claiborne, East Baton Rouge, Vernon, Winn, Orleans, Lincoln, DeSoto, Catahoula, Tensas, Red River, Vermilion, and Bienville. The states represented were Mississippi and Alabama. On the other hand, of a total of eighty-two students in the practice department (school) seventy-nine were from Natchitoches.

President Sheib did not openly condone the inclusion of preparatory work at the Normal, he considered a preparatory school to the Normal a "necessary evil" to upgrade the educational attainments of the applicants for admission. He obviously felt the local Natchitoches residents were taking undue advantage of both the lower grades and the practice school instead of supporting their own schools and he suggested that if a high school were built it should be with community funds and not state monies.²⁷

In addition to inadequately prepared students, President Sheib was unhappy with the management of the Normal. He felt that the Board of Administrators should not be composed solely of local Natchitoches residents, for then "the very spirit of liberal and ideal growth is smothered under a necessity of soliciting local patronage, of submitting to local prejudices and of importuning local approval."²⁸ He suggested that the state legislature change the composition of the board by providing that it be made up of men from different sections of the state selected for their intelligence and interest in improving the educational system. The local vicinity, he felt, should have only limited representation, while the State Superintendent of Education and the president of the Normal should be ex-officio members of the board. He likewise recommended that the Normal School faculty be selected by the board at least two months prior to the opening of a session so that the best teachers might be obtained instead of those available at the last minute as had been the practice in the past. According to Dr. Sheib, the teachers should have the approval of the president of the school and the State Superintendent of Education before their appointments.²⁹

President Sheib's comments on the Board of Administrators represent more than just professional recommendations for the improvement of the Normal. They reflect a continuous pattern of strife and discord which had developed between himself and the board. "Out of this mistake [a local board] has grown an endless train of evils which have again and again forced the Institution to the very verge of destruction," he exclaimed.³⁰ As early as April 1887 trouble developed between the president and the board concerning their respective authority over the employment and retention of faculty members. Demanding more administrative control, Dr. Sheib tendered his resignation which the board, on April 2, declined to accept. But, at the same time, the board refused to relinquish its powers, based on Act 51, to direct the affairs of the Normal and declared a policy of not dismissing any faculty member without charges being presented before it.³¹ Two days later, in a board meeting, the question of the president's authority in faculty affairs

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 209-10.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 214.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 214-15.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 214.

³¹ Minutes of the Board of Administrators, 15-16, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U. The exact nature of the dispute between President Sheib and the board is not contained in the minutes.

was again discussed with correspondence of Dr. Sheib, the board, and Miss Rousseau, a faculty member whom President Sheib had wanted to dismiss, presented. The resignations of five other women faculty members, effective October 1, 1887, were also read. Fortunately, a committee of five Natchitoches citizens worked out a compromise agreeable at the time to all parties.³²

Less than three months later the discord between President Sheib and Miss Rousseau once again emerged. To return harmony to the school, on June 22, 1887, by a unanimous vote of those attending, the board requested the resignations of both President Sheib and Miss Rousseau.³³ The next day the drama heightened when Dr. Sheib received a petition signed by nearly a hundred "patrons and pupils (and others) who "do earnestly urge you to refuse your resignation, as we are well satisfied with your management of the school so far, and further for the reason that we consider the action of the board in violation of a friendly, final, and honorable adjustment of the misunderstanding between yourself and them."³⁴ The signees included city officials as well as members of the citizens' committee of five who earlier had tried to resolve the dispute.³⁵ As urged, President Sheib refused to resign and finally on July 1, 1887, the board adopted the following resolutions to defuse the issue:

First, that both Dr. Shieb [*sic*] and Miss Rousseau remain if they desire as teachers for another session, conducting themselves towards each other with courtesy and justice, and abstaining from renewal in any form of former differences.

2nd, Both to recognize the authority of the Board to elect teachers fix their compensation and regulate all the interests of the school, notwithstanding any settlement, agreement or usage heretofore made or prevailing. This proposition is made solely in the interest of the school. . . .³⁶

Although harmony was restored to the Normal through these propositions, the important question was still unanswered. Who, the president or the Board of Administrators, had ultimate authority over the faculty? Obviously, President Sheib felt that he should have and resented the interference of the board. Thus he recommended that both he and the Superintendent of Public Education approve all faculty appointments in the future. The board felt just as strongly that faculty appointments were their prerogative based on Act 51.

³²Ibid., 16. Again the records are sketchy with neither the correspondence nor the committee's report included.

³³Ibid., 17.

³⁴Petition to Dr. E.E. Sheib, June 23, 1887, Vertical File, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Minutes of the Board of Administrators, 18, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

In the Spring of 1888 another difference arose between the president and the Board of Administrators. This one concerned two young ladies whom President Sheib had dismissed from the Normal for improper conduct. The girls had sent off for a pamphlet publicizing painless and safe childbirth which they had seen advertised in a newspaper. Upon their expulsion, the students demanded a hearing before the board which was granted. In an emotional session, Dr. Sheib, the girls, faculty members, and other students all testified. After hearing all parties the board concluded that while the girls' conduct was "imprudent and thoughtless," it was "only girlish curiosity or fun," and therefore did not warrant expulsion as punishment. The girls were thus reinstated to the school. Furthermore, the board condemned the method of letting the senior class determine the fate of the accused with one negative vote being sufficient to prevent their being retained in school.³⁷ Although the board was probably correct, or at least certainly charitable, in its decision, President Sheib had always felt that among the purposes of the Normal School was the production of a moral being as well as an intellectual one. "It is the teacher who appears before the class at the same time as a guardian, as instructor, as friend, as guide — and as the model man or woman whose truth, sincerity, and purity are worthy of imitation."³⁸ He believed that the students "should refrain from improprieties of conduct" and that they "should govern themselves."³⁹ These principles explain what otherwise might be considered his harsh punishment of the girls.

Shortly after the resolution of the incident involving the students, President Sheib tendered his resignation to be effective May 1, 1888.⁴⁰ Certainly disappointment and frustration must have played a part in his decision to leave the Normal. Nevertheless, his three year administration had been a successful one in many aspects. He had laid the foundations for an institution that would shortly receive increased public and state recognition. He had begun the teachers' institutes to improve teachers already in the profession. Despite his problems with the Board of Administrators, he had won the enthusiastic support of the students and many townspeople. He had obtained increased financial support for the Normal from the legislature and had made many recommendations for changes in the school's administration, which though not adopted during his tenure, would be accepted

³⁷Ibid., 21-22.

³⁸Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Education, 1886-1887, 211.

³⁹Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Education, 1884-1885, 197.

⁴⁰Minutes of the Board of Administrators, 22, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U. When Dr. Sheib left the Normal he became professor of pedagogy and dean of the Normal Department at the University of South Carolina. Upon resigning that position, he accepted a chair of history and English literature at Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Leaving there in 1901, he became associate professor of philosophy and pedagogy at Tulane University and finally head of the Department of Pedagogy. He also served as Director of Athletics at Tulane. In 1903 Dr. Sheib died in New Orleans and his body was shipped to Natchitoches for interment. Memorial services were held at the Normal School and classes suspended for the rest of the day in his memory. "Professor Edward E. Sheib Dies After a Gallant Struggle," New Orleans Daily Picayune, March 29, 1903; The Natchitoches Times, April 3, 1903.

shortly. Most significantly, he had seen graduates leave the Normal to go throughout the state and actively crusade among the people for better teachers and schools. The impact and dedication of those early graduates was tremendous in awakening an interest in education. When President Sheib left the Normal School, there was no longer any doubt about its continuance. The well-constructed foundations were due to his unceasing labors. Unfortunately, they were weakened by the almost two years of endless strife and bickering between Dr. Sheib and the Board of Administrators which had involved faculty and students as well. His successor would have to work exceedingly hard to restore peaceful relations among the elements of the school's community.

Upon the resignation of Dr. Sheib, the Board of Administrators contracted with Alby L. Smith, a Normal faculty member, to serve as acting president to work with the State Superintendent of Education in scheduling and directing six weeks of teachers' institutes during the summer months. Meanwhile, the board began a search for a new administrator for the Normal School. On July 2, they unanimously elected Thomas Duckett Boyd, a professor of history and English literature at Louisiana State University, offering him a twelve month contract, an annual salary of two thousand dollars, and unfurnished quarters.⁴¹

Thomas Duckett Boyd was born January 20, 1854, the ninth of ten children of Thomas Jefferson and Minerva (French) Boyd, in Wytheville, Virginia. His father, Thomas Jefferson Boyd, attended the University of Virginia where in 1827 he graduated in law. Entering public service, the elder Boyd served on the Wytheville town council and in the state legislature. His son, Thomas Duckett, received his early education in the excellent private school of Howard Shriver in the small Virginia town. At the age of fourteen, he came to Louisiana to finish his studies at the State Seminary of Learning and Military Academy (designated Louisiana State University in 1870) where his brother, David French Boyd, was superintendent. Graduating with a Master of Arts degree in June 1872, Thomas returned to Virginia where he worked as a surveyor and began the study of law. The next Spring his brother offered him an internship in mathematics at Louisiana State University which he eagerly accepted despite a meager salary due to the mismanagement of the state's reconstruction government. In the fall of 1875, Thomas D. Boyd was named Commandant of Cadets at the university and given the honorary military title "Colonel." Although his brother was forced to resign as president of Louisiana State University in 1880, Colonel Thomas Boyd, having been appointed professor of history and English literature, decided to remain. While in Baton Rouge, in 1882, he married Miss Annie Fuqua, daughter of one of Louisiana's leading families. Six years later he was offered the presidency of the school at Natchitoches.⁴²

⁴¹Minutes of the Board of Administrators, 22, 25, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁴²Rodney Cline, *Pioneer Leaders and Early Institutions in Louisiana Education* (Baton Rouge, 1969), 27-29; Marcus M. Wilkerson, *Thomas Duckett Boyd, The Story of a Southern Educator* (Baton Rouge, 1935), 11-13, 33-35, 48, 76, 91.

The proffered position was a complete surprise to Professor Boyd. One day two gentlemen, Judge David Pierson, President of the Normal's Board of Administrators, and his close friend, Judge William Seay of Shreveport who had recommended Boyd for the presidency, unexpectedly visited Boyd's senior history class at the university. At that time Judge Pierson talked to Professor Boyd about the presidency of the State Normal School. The history professor protested that he knew nothing about normal schools and was therefore hesitant to accept such a position. Whereupon Judge Pierson replied that "the Board wanted a man who knew less about normal schools and more about the people and conditions of Louisiana." Professor Boyd agreed to accept the position if chosen, but stated that he would not apply for it.⁴³

By the time Colonel Boyd was elected president on July 2, 1888, part of Dr. Sheib's recommendation concerning the makeup of the school's board had been effected by the state legislature. A few weeks earlier the General Assembly had modified the composition of the board by declaring that it "shall consist of six competent white citizens, who shall be selected and appointed by the State Board of Education, one from each of the first five circuits of the courts of appeal, and one from the city of Natchitoches. . . ." The appointments still carried no compensation, except traveling expenses, and were for a four-year period.⁴⁴ The Normal now had a state based Board of Administrators rather than a local one, and the board, in turn, had a new president for the school.

Thomas Duckett Boyd was the same age, thirty-four, as Edward E. Sheib had been when he accepted the presidency of the State Normal School. But there the similarities ended. Dr. Sheib, professionally trained in teacher education and a distinguished scholar in educational circles, was totally ignorant of the backwardness of Louisiana's educational system and, to a certain degree, of its people. Colonel Boyd, on the other hand, had spent twenty years in Louisiana in the service of the state university. His experiences were those of a classroom teacher, not an administrator, during the economically-deprived years of Reconstruction. More importantly, he knew and understood the vicissitudes of education in Louisiana from practical experiences. Administration he would learn quickly.

⁴³Wilkerson, *Boyd*, 93-94.

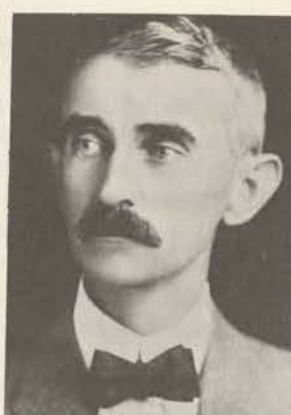
⁴⁴*Acts and Resolutions Passed by The General Assembly of the State of Louisiana at the regular Session Begun and Held at the City of Baton Rouge on the Fourteenth day of May, A.D. 1888, and which Adjourned on Thursday, the Twelfth day of July, A.D. 1888* (Baton Rouge, 1888), 18. Under the 1888 act, the new board members were: W.H. Wise, First Circuit, Caddo Parish, President; A.B. Cooper, Second Circuit, Richland Parish; R.P. Hunter, Third Circuit, Rapides Parish; George Wailles, Fourth Circuit, Iberville Parish; Don Caffery, Fifth Circuit, St. Mary Parish, and Z.T. Gallion, Natchitoches. J.A. Ducournau, Sr. and Thomas P. Chaplin were retained respectively as treasurer and secretary of the board. Minutes of the Board of Administrators, 25, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.



Edward E. Sheib, 1884-1888



Thomas D. Boyd, 1888-1896



Beverly C. Caldwell, 1896-1908



James B. Aswell, 1908-1911



Victor L. Roy, 1911-1929



William W. Tison, 1929-1934



Albert A. Fredericks, 1934-1941



Joe Farrar, 1941-1947



Joseph E. Gibson, 1947-1949



Garnie W. McGinty, 1949-1950



H. Lee Prather, 1950-1954



John S. Kyser, 1954-1966



Arnold R. Kilpatrick, 1966-1978



René J. Bienvenu, Jr., 1978-1982



Joseph J. Orze, 1982-

Shortly after assuming control of the Normal, President Boyd realized the serious difficulties which faced the young institution. In writing to the Board of Administrators he revealed his immediate problems and his assessment of the president's role in resolving them.

When your Honorable body did me the honor to elect me to the Presidency of the Louisiana State Normal School, in July, 1888, the outlook for the school was gloomy in the extreme. It had just emerged from a bitter contest between the President and the Board of Administrators, in which the faculty, the students, and the outside public had taken part. This strife, carried on through two sessions, had well nigh sapped the foundations of the infant State Normal, though they had been skillfully laid by my able predecessor, Dr. Edward E. Sheib. Moreover, the General Assembly, which was just closing its session, reduced the appropriation from \$13,000 per annum for the two years ending June 30, 1888, to \$8,500 per annum for the two years beginning July 1, 1888. And a large part of this reduction was made after your honorable body had selected the corps of teachers for the coming year and fixed their salaries. Thus I found myself, in an untried field, confronted with the problem to carry on with an income of \$8,500 per annum, a work planned for an expenditure of \$13,000 per annum, and to evolve from the chaos of antipathies engendered by a struggle of which I knew little, an institution that would supply the needs and satisfy the demands of the people of Louisiana. And such were the restrictions placed upon both the State appropriation and the donation from the Peabody Fund, which has generously supplemented the State appropriation ever since the school was founded, that although I found the buildings in great need of repair, I could not even replace a window pane blown out by a storm, without feeling that I was infringing the law.⁴⁵

Not disheartened, however, the president continued to outline the fourfold task before him.

(1) To win the confidence of the people of Louisiana, (2) to bring about harmony in the faculty, (3) to make the instruction as thorough as possible in all departments, (4) to advance the grade of scholarship in the Normal Department without materially diminishing the amount of professional training required for graduation.⁴⁶

Although slight in stature and retiring in public, President Boyd set out to accomplish his four stated goals with a determination to succeed. The first, winning the confidence of the Louisiana people, was perhaps the most difficult and the

⁴⁵Report of the Board of Administrators of the Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La. To The General Assembly, 1890 (New Orleans, 1890), 23.

⁴⁶Ibid., 24.

one he immediately tackled. In an open letter to the people of Louisiana upon his taking office, he declared "upon the success of this institution [the State Normal School] depends, in a great measure, the future efficiency of the public schools of this state." He admitted that "Weighed down by an oppressive debt, her people not yet recovered from the ravages of war and the horror of reconstruction, Louisiana is poorly prepared to give the masses of her people the education which modern progress demands. Her public schools are not what her people would wish them to be either in number or in the quality of their instruction." He explained that the aim of the Normal School, with its nine competent instructors in teacher training and its practice department, is to "improve the quality of their [schools'] instruction. This it proposes to do by training teachers for public schools." Pleading for the active support and cooperation of all Louisianians, he continued "it is to the people and to the public press that we appeal for support in our efforts to build up in Louisiana an institution that shall be the peer of any Normal College in the United States; an institution from whose walls shall go forth each year scores of trained teachers to infuse new life into our public schools."⁴⁷

President Boyd's crusade to inspire public interest and confidence in the State Normal School and state-supported education was multifaceted. He fostered a number of activities involving Normal faculty, in-service teachers, and the general public that were designed to arouse public support for education in Louisiana while at the same time improving that education. Foremost among these activities were the Normal sponsored teachers' institutes. While teachers' institutes had become an integral part of the Normal's operation under President Sheib, they were expanded and perfected under Colonel Boyd. The early institutes, often one day meetings, stressed the teaching of subjects such as English, mathematics, history, and geography. Little attention was given to pedagogy, since the teachers were so poorly prepared in subject matter knowledge.⁴⁸ Gradually institutes were lengthened to a week or a month and encompassed additional pedagogical instruction. In addition to improving teachers' qualifications, the institutes awakened in the general public a favorable sentiment toward public schools. One educator described the institute as "a protracted meeting of school workers, an educational revival. Night sessions are held for the general public and the talks and discussions are addressed to parents and taxpayers; . . ."⁴⁹ Generally the institutes were conducted by the Normal School faculty but often their work was supplemented by prominent out-of-state educators such as Martin C. Brumbaugh of Pennsylvania and Beverly C. Caldwell of Missouri.⁵⁰

⁴⁷Thomas D. Boyd to the people of Louisiana, Natchitoches, La., July, 1888, Williamson Collection, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana. Cited hereafter as A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁴⁸T.H. Harris, *The Memoirs of T.H. Harris State Superintendent of Public Education in Louisiana, 1908-1940* (Baton Rouge, 1963), 86.

⁴⁹Pettis, "Development of Louisiana State Normal College," 35.

⁵⁰Ibid., 36.

As the teachers' institutes gained momentum, it was apparent that the movement needed better organization and direction. In 1886 an act of the state legislature had directed the faculty of the State Normal School to hold a series of teachers' institutes in a six-week period throughout the state, but had appropriated only one thousand dollars to defray expenses of these meetings.⁵¹ In his biennial report of 1890-91 W.H. Jack, State Superintendent of Public Education, noted that the legislature had not appropriated any money the previous year for the institutes and that it was only through the generosity of Dr. J.L.M. Curry, agent of the Peabody fund, that institutes were held in Plaquemine, Monroe, Homer, Amite City, Minden, Thibodaux, Lafayette, and Plain Dealing. Superintendent Jack's report also included proposed changes in the institute law which were recommended by President Boyd. The Normal president felt that the teachers' institutes should not be held during the summer vacation but rather immediately preceding or during the public school session. His reasons for changing the timing of the institutes were twofold: the teachers could immediately put into practice what they learned and, more importantly, they could be compelled to attend during the regular school year but not in the summer months. President Boyd also recommended the appointment of a state institute conductor under the supervision of the State Superintendent of Public Education and the President of the Normal School.⁵² Although reluctant at first, Governor Murphy J. Foster, with the strong urging of President Boyd, finally supported an institute bill which became law in 1894.⁵³ It provided for twenty weeks of institutes and the appointment of an institute conductor at a salary not exceeding one thousand dollars a year who would also be an ex-officio member of the Normal faculty and receive remuneration for his services there.⁵⁴ Beverly C. Caldwell, who had been working with the teachers' institutes five years, was appointed first state institute conductor. Two years later, the state legislature further strengthened the teachers' institutes by instructing the State Superintendent of Public Education and the President of the Normal School to hold as many four-week state teachers' institutes or summer normal schools as funding permitted and by ordering each parish school superintendent to hold a one-week institute for teachers with attendance required.⁵⁵ The success of the teachers' institutes in the 1890s was due, in a large measure, to the determined, if

⁵¹"An Act to amend and re-enact Act 51 of the year 1884, entitled 'An act to establish a State Normal School and to provide for its administration and support,'" Acts Passed By the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana at The Regular Session, Begun and Held at the City of Baton Rouge, on the Tenth Day of May, A.D., 1886 (Baton Rouge, 1886), 102-3.

⁵²*Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education To The General Assembly, 1890-91* (New Orleans, 1892), 17, 178-9.

⁵³Thomas D. Boyd to Governor Murphy J. Foster, June 20, 1892, Williamson Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁵⁴"An Act To provide for holding State Teachers' Institutes in the Several parishes," Acts Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana at The Regular Session Begun and Held in the City of Baton Rouge on the Fourteenth Day of May, 1894 (Baton Rouge, 1894), 72-73.

⁵⁵"An Act Relative to State and Parish Teachers' Institutes, and amending and re-enacting Act No. 64 of 1894, entitled 'An Act to provide for holding State Teachers' Institutes in the several parishes,'" *Acts Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session of 1896* (Baton Rouge, 1896) 158-61.

not stubborn, leadership of Colonel Thomas D. Boyd and the excellent dedicated work of the Normal School faculty.

Colonel Boyd's involvement with the teachers' institutes led him and the Normal School into another exciting educational adventure — the Louisiana Chautauqua. Nationally, the Chautauqua was a movement to stimulate intellectual, cultural, and recreational interests among common people, especially adults. Varying from state to state, it took a more educational bent in Louisiana than in many other areas. According to its charter, the Louisiana Chautauqua provided an institution "at which meetings of the Louisiana Educational Association shall be held, summer normal schools taught, lectures, readings, concerts and other educational entertainment given, and where such other exercises and proceedings may be annually carried out as will tend to improve and gratify and benefit the teachers of Louisiana and advance the cause of enlightenment in our State."⁵⁶

Organized by a three-man committee of the Louisiana Educational Association, which included President Boyd, the Louisiana Chautauqua "had some of the elements of a festival, a watering place, a school or college, a public forum. It had the sociability of the old-time camp meeting."⁵⁷ Located on a forty-acre wooded tract near Ruston, the accommodations, including an auditorium with a seating capacity of two thousand, a hotel, cottages, and classrooms, were simple and crude.⁵⁸ Nonetheless, crowds came to see and hear nationally known political leaders, ministers, educators, and artists. Teachers came to attend the Chautauqua summer schools which featured such prominent educators as J.W. Nicholson, Alcée Fortier, Thomas D. Boyd, B.C. Caldwell, and others.⁵⁹ For the teacher, the spirit of the Chautauqua was the opportunity for invigorating association with outstanding educators and fellow teachers. As Miss Bessie V. Russell described it, the "physical discomforts were many, such as sleepless nights in the thin-walled rooms of the crude hotel, and hard, backless benches in the auditorium, but the air was exhilarating, the woods beautiful, the watermelons superb and the springs a happy meeting place for everyone. Nothing could dampen our spirits at the Chautauqua."⁶⁰ Other Normalites must certainly have agreed with her, for at the 1894 Chautauqua held at Ruston they formed the State Normal Alumni Association at a meeting presided over by President Boyd. A constitution was adopted and, appropriately, Miss Russell was elected president.⁶¹ The Normal supported the

⁵⁶Wilkerson, *Boyd*, 120.

⁵⁷C.A. Ives, *As I Remember* (Baton Rouge, 1964), 106.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*

⁵⁹Harris, *Memoirs*, 87.

⁶⁰Bessie V. Russell, "Recollections of the Birth of the Alumni," Vertical File, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁶¹*Ibid.*; Pettis, "Development of Louisiana State Normal College," 33.

Chautauqua, the Chautauqua supported the Normal, and President Boyd served both institutions with zeal and dedication.

President Boyd's successful campaign to take education from the Normal campus to the people by way of teachers' institutes and the Chautauqua was matched by his equally vigorous crusade "to bring about harmony in the [Normal] faculty and make the instruction as thorough as possible in all departments."⁶² During his tenure major changes were made in the administration of the school beginning at the top with the Board of Administrators. By legislative enactment of 1892, the method of appointing the Board of Administrators was modified. The governor instead of the State Board of Education named the board and served as ex-officio president of it.⁶³ "I think the Governor should be the official head of all state institutions, but such has never been the case here, for what reason I know not, . . ." declared President Boyd to Governor Murphy J. Foster.⁶⁴ At the same time, he expressed hope of having the opportunity to confer with the governor before he made his choices of board members.⁶⁵ Undoubtedly Colonel Boyd felt that this change would bring about a better relationship between himself and the administrators, a luxury which President Sheib had never enjoyed. It would also increase the state's chief executive's knowledge and support of the Normal's operations, since he would be presiding at board meetings usually held in Natchitoches.

The teaching corps was likewise strengthened at the Normal during the Boyd years. Beginning with three instructors in 1888, the number had risen to fifteen by 1897.⁶⁶ The additional teachers were selected carefully by the president who had a noted reputation himself as an outstanding instructor. His choices of teachers from other states rather than local Normal graduates added prestige to the faculty and improved the curriculum. In 1893 Colonel Boyd elatedly notified J.L.M. Curry of three "excellent" additions to the Normal faculty — an English teacher from Georgia, a science teacher from Tennessee, and a drawing instructor from Boston.⁶⁷ With the increase in quality and quantity of faculty, the insipid dissension disappeared, and Boyd's policy of raising faculty salaries before his own also enhanced faculty morale.⁶⁸

⁶²*Report of Board of Administrators, 1890, 23.*

⁶³"An Act Relative to the State Normal School at Natchitoches, amending and re-enacting Act No. 61 of 1886 and Act No. 23 of 1888," *Acts Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session Begun and Held in the City of Baton Rouge, on the Ninth Day of May 1892* (Baton Rouge, 1892), 93. The Board of Administrators were to hold one regular meeting each year at the close of the annual school session and other meetings as deemed necessary. Natchitoches was the official domicile of the board.

⁶⁴Thomas D. Boyd to Governor Murphy J. Foster, June 20, 1892 (typewritten copy), Williamson Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*

⁶⁶*Shreveport Times*, August 18, 1897.

⁶⁷Thomas D. Boyd to J.L.M. Curry, May 18, 1893 (typewritten copy), Williamson Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁶⁸Thomas D. Boyd to the Board of Administrators, May 29, 1893, *ibid.*

President Boyd's fourth objective, "to advance the grade of scholarship in the Normal Department without materially diminishing the amount of professional training required for graduation,"⁶⁹ entailed major curriculum changes at the Normal. Originally, the Normal program was a two-year course of which six months was heavily concentrated on the art and practice of teaching and other professional subjects. The first school catalog of 1885-1886 listed as the course of study the review and methods of teaching arithmetic, geography, grammar, composition, reading and phonetics, history, drawing, penmanship, spelling, calisthenics, and music; literature, natural sciences, hygienic physiology, civil government, philosophy of education, history of education, science and art of teaching, psychology, ethics, discipline and school management; practical teaching in the practice school.⁷⁰ Heavily burdened with professional requirements, the curriculum provided little work in academic subjects. Yet there was no public graded, grammar, or high school within a hundred-mile radius of Natchitoches to feed adequately prepared students into the Normal program. Thus, of the four classes at the Normal only two, junior and senior, were pursuing normal school work. The other two, "A" and "B" classes, were doing work preparatory to entering normal courses. In 1887 President Sheib lamented that thirty-one students were enrolled in the two advanced classes while thirty-three were in "A" and "B" classes.⁷¹ In 1889 President Boyd discontinued all preparatory work at the Normal because of the lengthening of the course to three years and the overcrowded conditions of campus facilities.⁷²

Academic scholarship at the Normal was raised not only by eliminating all preparatory work but principally by extending the length of the normal course. T.H. Harris, a Normal student, described the early program: "There was only one course of study, and all students took it. There were no electives. I should say that the two-year course was about the equivalent, as to academic subjects, of the present junior and senior years of our high schools."⁷³ In 1886 President Sheib recommended a three-year program to do justice to all the subjects required. He noted that advanced students could still finish in less time by passing subject matter examinations.⁷⁴ In response, the state legislature extended the course to three years in 1886.⁷⁵ The new three-year curriculum incorporated the following arrangement: First Year ("A") Class — arithmetic, English, grammar and com-

⁶⁹*Report of Board of Administrators, 1890, 23.*

⁷⁰*Circular of the State Normal School of Louisiana at Natchitoches, La., and Rules Governing the Admission of Students, Their Promotion, Graduation, Etc., 1885-1886* (New Orleans, 1885), 12. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Circular, 1885-1886*.

⁷¹*Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Education, 1886-1887, 212.*

⁷²*Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Education, 1890-91, 175.*

⁷³Harris, *Memoirs*, 59.

⁷⁴*Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Education, 1884-1885, 199.*

⁷⁵"An Act to amend and re-enact Act 51 of the year 1884," *Acts Passed by the General Assembly, 1886, 102.*

position, geography, history of the United States, physiology and hygiene, civil government, penmanship; Second Year (Junior Class) — higher arithmetic, algebra, rhetoric and English literature, zoology and botany, psychology, general history, history of education; Third Year (Senior Class) — geometry, chemistry and physics, English history and literature, psychology, ethics, general pedagogy, school management, methods of teaching the primary branches, and practice teaching in the practice school. Elocution, drawing, vocal music, and calisthenics were taught each week during the entire three years. Additionally, instrumental music, bookkeeping, French and Latin were offered at a monthly charge.⁷⁶ President Boyd felt the three year program still inadequate arguing:

However correct may be the theory that a Normal School should elevate itself exclusively to professional, as distinguished from academic work, an institution organized on this theory must fail, for lack of patronage, where there is no system of grammar and high schools to give the academic instruction or scholarship which is as important a part of teacher's equipment as a knowledge of methods. Such an institution here would serve only to train teachers for primary work; and outside of New Orleans and one or two of the larger towns, there is little demand for separate primary teachers. The graduates of this institution are called upon to teach schools in which the pupils range from six to twenty-one years of age, and call for every grade of instruction from the kindergarten to the college. To prepare our graduates for this varied work, we must give them a thorough high school course as well as a course of training in methods of teaching. These conditions are not peculiar to Louisiana, and I observe that nine-tenths of the normal schools in other states have a course of study (usually of four years) in which academic and professional instruction are combined in about the proportion of three to one. I have long recognized the necessity for such a course here. . . .⁷⁷

In 1892 the Louisiana legislature again extended the Normal course — this time to four years. Colonel Boyd planned to devote two and a half sessions to "thorough academic work" and one and a half sessions to "thorough professional training." He exclaimed, "Our graduates hereafter will be qualified to fill any position in the public schools from the primary to the high school."⁷⁸

While the Normal course was being upgraded, the age of admission was corre-

⁷⁶*Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La., Circular, 1890-91* (New Orleans, 1890), 6-7. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Circular, 1890-91*.

⁷⁷Thomas D. Boyd to J.L.M. Curry, August 22, 1892 (typewritten copy), Williamson Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*; "An Act Relative to the State Normal School," *Acts Passed by the General Assembly, 1892*, 94.

spondingly lowered. In 1884 an applicant had to be eighteen years old to enter the Normal; in 1886, sixteen years old; and in 1892, fifteen if female and sixteen if male.⁷⁹ Other entrance requirements, which remained constant, were demonstrated proficiency in the ordinary subjects of a common school education and a bona fide intention of teaching at least one year in Louisiana's public schools.⁸⁰ In 1892 legislation raised admission standards by requiring satisfactory evidence of both good character and academic proficiency as well as a written statement of intention to continue in school until graduation, unless sooner dismissed, and to teach at least one year in the public schools.⁸¹ Upon graduation the Normal student received a diploma which was a valid teaching certificate for three years and renewable thereafter for a similar period. In 1886 the period of validation was raised to four years while in 1892 the certificate was designed as a first grade teacher's certificate (high school) and entitled its holder to preference in teaching in the public schools.⁸² Clearly there was a great demand and competition for Normal graduates among the public schools of Louisiana during the 1890s. By 1893 Caddo parish boasted that 20 percent of its teachers were Normal graduates which represented 10 percent of the State Normal's graduates since the school's beginning.⁸³

With higher standards of scholarship and modified entrance requirements came increased enrollment. In its first year the State Normal had sixty students plus a small number in the practice class.⁸⁴ By 1890, with a total enrollment of 231, including eighty-four in normal classes, President Boyd was predicting little future increase unless additional student boarding facilities were provided.⁸⁵ In 1893, he noted that except for the dining room building erected in 1890, the Normal's buildings were the same as those donated by the town of Natchitoches in 1884. Because of the lack of boarding space, teachers lost the privilege of living on campus.⁸⁶ With the erection of an academic building, Boyd Hall, in 1895 over-

⁷⁹"An Act to establish a State Normal School," *Acts Passed by the General Assembly, 1884*, 61; "An Act to amend and re-enact Act 51 of the year 1884," *Acts Passed by the General Assembly, 1886*, 102; "An Act Relative to the State Normal School," *Acts Passed by the General Assembly, 1892*, 94.

⁸⁰"An Act to establish a State Normal School," *Acts Passed by the General Assembly, 1884*, 61; "An Act to amend and re-enact Act 51 of the year 1884," *Acts Passed by the General Assembly, 1886*, 102; "An Act Relative to the State Normal School," *Acts Passed by the General Assembly, 1892*, 94.

⁸¹*Ibid.* These admission requirements were being enforced by Normal authorities before becoming part of the 1892 law.

⁸²"An Act to establish a State Normal School," *Acts Passed by the General Assembly, 1884*, 61; "An Act to amend and re-enact Act 51 of the year 1884," *Acts Passed by the General Assembly, 1886*, 103; "An Act Relative to the State Normal School," *Acts Passed by the General Assembly, 1892*, 94.

⁸³*Shreveport Times*, September 20, 1893.

⁸⁴*Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Education, 1884-1885*, 197.

⁸⁵*Report of Board of Administrators, 1890*, 20-21.

⁸⁶*Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education To The General Assembly, 1892-1893* (Baton Rouge, 1894), 56-7.

crowding was relieved temporarily by converting the old Convent Building into a women's dormitory containing thirty-five bedrooms. Additionally, the dining hall building provided eight second floor bedrooms and baths for female students.⁸⁷ By 1896, the last year of Colonel Boyd's tenure, enrollment reached 362, again presenting a problem of overcrowding.⁸⁸

Some of the increased Normal enrollment resulted from the admittance of students who had no plans to complete the normal course or teach in the public schools. As early as 1891 President Boyd recommended the admission of students who wanted to pursue special courses of study. Such students would pay tuition fees whereas those entering the normal course paid none.⁸⁹ Finally in May 1895 the Board of Administrators voted to admit three classes of special students: (1) those wishing to select special subjects of study, (2) those wanting to take part of the normal course but not remain until graduation, and (3) those expecting to complete the normal course but who were unwilling to teach in the public schools. Students in the first classification had to select at least three subjects and pay four dollars per term for each one. Other special students would pay a tuition of twenty dollars per term.⁹⁰ Actually, President Boyd was creating a college serving various educational interests rather than a normal school devoted strictly to teacher training.

President Boyd's plans for an expanding mission for the State Normal can be discerned clearly in the 1890s when the question of erecting a state industrial school for women arose. Feeling that the proper course would be to annex an industrial department to the Normal, Colonel Boyd farsightedly presented the school's case to the General Assembly in 1892.

The State Normal School is giving free training for the profession of teaching to hundreds of young women of the state, thereby insuring them independence for life; and upon this fact it bases no small part of its claim upon your fostering care. But teaching is not the only profession in which women may engage. The arts and industries that have sprung from the rapid development of modern science, have thrown open to them many other avenues of useful employment. One of the latest educational movements is the establishment of schools to train young women for the various industrial arts.⁹¹

⁸⁷Pettis, "Development of Louisiana State Normal College," 12.

⁸⁸*Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La. Catalogue, 1895-96, Announcement, 1896-97* (New Orleans, 1896), 19, cited hereafter as *Normal School Catalogue, 1895-96; Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education To The General Assembly, 1896-97* (Baton Rouge, 1898), 18.

⁸⁹*Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Education, 1890-91*, 179; "Proposed Changes in the Law" (typewritten copy), Williamson Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁹⁰*Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La. Catalogue 1894-95* (New Orleans, 1895), 28, 31. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Catalogue, 1894-95*.

⁹¹"Female Industrial School" (typewritten copy), Williamson Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

He questioned whether the state could establish a new educational institution and still adequately support existing ones. "To spend only money enough to fail in accomplishing one's purpose is folly, whether it be done by an individual or a state; and concentration of capital and effort is as necessary to the success of educational institutions as of other business enterprises."⁹² He suggested that an outlay of five thousand dollars or less per annum for two years would permit the State Normal to include an industrial department since several industrial courses were already being taught.⁹³ In support of his idea of adding industrial studies to the Normal, President Boyd quoted from a paper presented by Mrs. Leon Jastremski to the Louisiana Educational Association in 1893 in which she questioned, "Why cannot they [dormitories] be made sufficiently ample to house industrial students also, and a joint Normal and Industrial College be founded? . . . Thus a twofold good will be accomplished — industrial training for young women and industrial training for teachers in our public schools."⁹⁴

By 1894 the drive to establish an industrial institute at Ruston intensified in the legislature. Again President Boyd opposed the measure for financial reasons declaring " . . . it goes against the grain to give up one dollar for the support of a useless rival institution for higher education for girls. . . ."⁹⁵ However, he also felt that "the Industrial School will be a perpetual menace, not only to this institution but also to the State University, in more ways than in the matter of appropriations." President Boyd feared an intense rivalry between the two north Louisiana schools that might eventually lead to the removal of the Normal to Ruston.⁹⁶ Although the Normal's president was unalterably opposed to an industrial school at Ruston, the Board of Administrators did not entirely agree. They discussed a resolution declaring that the Normal would be harmed by the annexation of an industrial branch and that they regarded "such an Institution located at such place as the Legislature may select, not as a rival to be feared, but as an ally in the great educational work of the State, to be encouraged as a co-laborer in the same great cause."⁹⁷ All opposition to the new school proved futile. The north Louisiana legislative delegation wanted the Ruston institution while Governor Foster was interested in obtaining support for his future senatorial campaign.⁹⁸ The Louisiana Industrial Institute became a reality in 1894, and certainly, as President Boyd had expected, a rival to the State Normal School at Natchitoches.

⁹²*Ibid.*

⁹³*Ibid.*

⁹⁴*Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Education, 1892-93*, 59-60.

⁹⁵Quoted in Wilkerson, *Boyd*, 126.

⁹⁶*Ibid.*

⁹⁷Minutes of Board of Administrators, 33, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U. Action on this resolution was deferred until a later time and not recorded then.

⁹⁸Wilkerson, *Boyd*, 128.

President Boyd had good reason to oppose any new educational institutions that would deny or reduce the Normal's state support. During his tenure, he, as had his predecessor, fought fiercely for state appropriations and felt that the Normal's growth had been limited by a lack of financial support. In his first year, 1888, President Boyd saw his school's appropriation reduced from thirteen thousand dollars to eighty-five hundred dollars per annum for the ensuing two years.⁹⁹ In 1890 President Boyd asked for twelve thousand dollars a year for operations and twenty-five thousand dollars for capital outlay. The legislature appropriated only ten thousand dollars for operations a year and twenty-five hundred dollars for repairs and building.¹⁰⁰ Two years later he requested seventy-five thousand dollars for a new building, twenty-five hundred dollars for repairs, and fifteen thousand dollars per annum for operational support.¹⁰¹ By that time the Normal had public support for its requests. The *Shreveport Times* recognized the excellent work of the institution and strongly recommended that the requested appropriations be granted.¹⁰² Nonetheless, the Normal received only \$12,500 a year support and twenty-five hundred dollars for repairs and buildings.¹⁰³ In 1893 the Louisiana Press Association, which had visited the school and was impressed with its work, joined the chorus demanding increased appropriations.¹⁰⁴ Finally, in July 1894 the legislature appropriated fifteen thousand dollars for a new building. Through great effort, the school's authorities erected a three-story wooden building with steam heat in 1895 for the surprisingly small sum of eighteen thousand dollars. All but about eight hundred dollars was paid out of existing Normal funds by scrimping and saving.¹⁰⁵ However, the annual appropriation was not increased significantly. By 1896 President Boyd was requesting a minimum annual appropriation of \$18,500 plus special appropriations for building and repairs.¹⁰⁶ By that time he was considering leaving the presidency of the Normal School.

In June 1896 Thomas D. Boyd had been elected president of his old alma mater, Louisiana State University. For a variety of reasons he hesitated to accept the proffered position. The Normal was running smoothly; it was larger in enrollment than the State University, the presidents' salaries were the same and the university was experiencing student and faculty unrest. Additionally, President Boyd was happy in Natchitoches. Inundated by telegrams from Louisiana State University

⁹⁹Report of Board of Administrators, 1890, 23.

¹⁰⁰Wilkerson, *Boyd*, 100-101.

¹⁰¹Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Education, 1890-91, 180.

¹⁰²*Shreveport Times*, May 5, 1892.

¹⁰³Wilkerson, *Boyd*, 102-103. Although Governor Murphy J. Foster sympathized with the needs of the Normal, the depression of the early 1890s and severe flooding in Louisiana made adequate funding impossible.

¹⁰⁴*Shreveport Times*, May 12, 1893.

¹⁰⁵Report of the Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, Louisiana, To The General Assembly, 1896 (Shreveport, n.d.), 7.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*, 9-10.

supporters urging him to accept the presidency and by Natchitoches citizens beseeching him to turn it down, he declined the offer. When Arthur T. Prescott of the Louisiana Industrial Institute also refused the LSU presidency, the position was once again tendered to President Boyd. Again Colonel Boyd's friends and relatives urged him to accept, while the Normal's supporters and friends petitioned him to stay at the Natchitoches school. The newspapers of the state joined the tug-of-war with their positions determined by which school they supported. Finally, on July 6, 1896, President Boyd decided to return to LSU and on July 11 the Board of Administrators accepted his resignation and elected B.C. Caldwell as the third president of the State Normal School.¹⁰⁷

During his eight years at the helm of the State Normal School, President Boyd had provided excellent administrative leadership. He was an inspiration to both the students and faculty in a quiet way while at the same time he upgraded the academic standards of the school. He had fought for increased funding from the state and had generally gained some, but not all, that he requested. He had seen the Normal enrollment more than double and new buildings erected and old ones repaired. The State Normal was always first among his interests and he had served the school well as its second president.

Attending the Louisiana State Normal School in the 1880s and 1890s was an exciting experience for young people never before away from home. A student learned of the school's program by word-of-mouth or most probably through one of the Normal's newspaper advertisements. One 1885 ad exclaimed, "The school offers to the youth of the State talented professors, magnificent buildings and grounds, healthy location, excellent society and the highest advantage of an educational character" while another in 1894 promoted the school as "unsurpassed in beauty and healthfulness of location, thoroughness of instruction and perfection of discipline." All the school's notices gave opening dates of sessions and boldly proclaimed tuition was free and classes open to both sexes.¹⁰⁸

Getting to the Normal School was a major problem for students in the early years since Natchitoches had no direct rail communications with other parts of the state. One Normal newspaper notice advised students to detrain at the Texas and Pacific Railway station at Provencal where hacks provided by public-spirited Natchitoches citizens would be found at all times to convey them to the school.¹⁰⁹ The most convenient Texas and Pacific Railway station, however, was at Cypress, eleven long, muddy, difficult miles from Natchitoches. Recognizing the immediate need for direct railroad connections for Normal students, in 1885 Leopold

¹⁰⁷Minutes of Board of Administrators, 41, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; Wilkerson, *Boyd*, 132-47. Thomas D. Boyd served with distinction as the president of Louisiana State University until 1926 when he retired.

¹⁰⁸*Shreveport Times*, October 7, 1885; August 26, 1894.

¹⁰⁹*Ibid.*, October 9, 1885.



In the Reading Room

Caspari organized the Natchitoches Land and Railway Company to build a "tap" railroad from Natchitoches to Cypress. To help defray construction expenses, in 1887 the town of Natchitoches levied a five-mill tax effective for ten years. In December the first train sped along the track pulled by a wood burning engine nicknamed "Hilda."¹¹⁰ "... It [first regular train run] will be a general celebration in the town of Natchitoches" wrote Miss Cammie Garrett, a student at the Normal. She continued, "You know it is the first time the greater part of these inhabitants ever saw such a thing as a *train*. Several hundred bails [*sic*] of cotton are lying at the depot waiting to be shipped on the first opportunity. It is perfectly ridiculous the way the people here carry on over this improvement."¹¹¹ Although the layover at Cypress was often long and disagreeable, the "tap" railroad gave the Normal direct communications to Cypress and from there to the southern portions of the state. For students the railroad station in Natchitoches was very conveniently located within three hundred yards of the school grounds.¹¹² Besides rail travel, early students came to the Normal by boat, landing either in town or at Grand Ecote, four miles to the west.¹¹³

As the Normalites approached the campus, they were undoubtedly impressed by the buildings and grounds. Immediately visible were the two original buildings — old Bullard Mansion and the Convent Building. Bullard Mansion, called the Matron's Building, was used for a dormitory containing the matron's room, infir-

¹¹⁰"Natchitoches To Cypress Round Trip Twenty-Two Miles," Vertical File, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana.

¹¹¹Cammie Garrett to her father, December 18, 1887, Melrose Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹¹²*Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La. Catalogue, 1892-93* (New Orleans, 1893), 16. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Catalogue, 1892-93*.

¹¹³*Normal School Circular, 1885-1886*, 15.

mary, two halls and six bedrooms while the convent structure served as the early classroom building. In 1890 a third building, the dining hall, was added to the campus. It was a two-story frame structure which housed a large kitchen, a dining hall accommodating 250 persons, and eight bedrooms and baths on the second floor.¹¹⁴ Finally in 1895 the Normal obtained a new administrative building, which at first was named the Normal Building, but later became known as Boyd Hall. Due to the niggardly state appropriation of fifteen thousand dollars, plans for a brick structure were abandoned and instead a three-story wooden building with a steam heating plant was constructed. To cut expenses the interior of the building was left unpainted except for the auditorium and offices. Boyd Hall housed administrative offices, an assembly hall with a seating capacity of one thousand, ten large classrooms, library, reading room, reception room, laboratory, and cloak rooms. It had ample windows, Venetian blinds to regulate the light, slate blackboards in most classrooms, and modern desk furniture.¹¹⁵ With the completion of the new administration building, the old convent structure, although needing repairs, was converted into a women's dormitory providing thirty-five bedrooms. The only other structure on campus was a small cottage built in 1894 as the president's home.¹¹⁶

From the beginning the State Normal provided boarding facilities for young ladies. The boarding department, known as the Normal Club, was organized separately from the general administration of the school and was managed by a housekeeper or matron assisted by faculty women and students under the supervision of the president. Monthly fees were levied to meet necessary cost of living expenses while monthly meetings were conducted to decide affairs of the club. The club boarding house, or Matron's Building, was occupied by the housekeeper, women faculty members, and students. Other women students lived on the third floor of the Convent Building.¹¹⁷ Rates were indeed reasonable for the young ladies. For a fee of from ten to twelve dollars a month, each girl was given a room "with bedsteads, mattresses, study table, washstand, bowl, pitcher and chair." Each student had to provide her own pillows, bedclothing, towels, and napkins. All personal items had to be marked plainly with the student's name.¹¹⁸ The 1890 catalog noted a slight rise in fees ranging from ten dollars to \$12.50 for board, lodging, fuel, and lights; \$1.50 per month for washing; and approximately ten dollars per session for books and stationery.¹¹⁹ Two years later an incidental fee of two dollars per session

¹¹⁴*Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Education, 1890-91*, 175; Pettis, "Development of Louisiana State Normal College," 12-13.

¹¹⁵*Report of Louisiana State Normal School, 1896*, 6-8.

¹¹⁶Otis R. Crew, "History of Northwestern State College of Louisiana" (typewritten), 17.

¹¹⁷*Report of Board of Administrators, 1890*, 14, 19. Mrs. Agnes E. Donaho served as matron of the Boarding Club from 1890 until her death in 1902. She was admired by students and school administrators alike. Pettis, "Development of Louisiana State Normal College," 26.

¹¹⁸*Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La. Catalogue for 1887-1888: Announcement for 1888-1889* (Shreveport, 1888), 15-16. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Catalogue, 1887-1888*.

¹¹⁹*Normal School Circular, 1890-91*, 9.

Northwestern State University

was assessed and the cost of books and stationery rose to about fifteen dollars per session.¹²⁰ President Boyd considered the boarding department a "necessary evil," stating "It may be dispensed with in a school located in a city or in the heart of a town; but it is absolutely indispensable here, as experience has clearly proven."¹²¹



Mrs. Donaho's room at old dorm

Young ladies, although encouraged to live in the club, could board with families in town, but only in houses meeting the president's approval. Young men, of course, had to board in town but again only in approved homes. The rates were generally twelve to fourteen dollars a month for town boarders.¹²² One Normalite later recalled that she boarded at Miss Hunter's house in town because she wanted to study to 3:00 or 4:00 a.m. instead of having to retire at 10:00 p.m. "Miss Hunter had never kept boarders before and knew almost nothing about it. She had a little trifling Negro girl to help her. Between them, they kept the poorest place I ever had anything to do with. The cooking was pittanceful [*sic*] Not much of it, and barely

¹²⁰Normal School Catalogue, 1892-93, 24.

¹²¹Report of Board of Administrators, 1890, 13-14. The rates varied slightly depending on the number of Club members and expenses.

¹²²Normal School Catalogue, 1887-1888, 15.

Light From Above Downwards

[*sic*] eatable. . . . I don't think Miss Hunter ever suspected how hungry we were." She explained that the boarders stayed there because Miss Hunter was a fine, lovely, old lady who was penniless with no other means of making a living.¹²³ A male student also recounted his boarding experiences. Living with a family a few miles down Cane River his first term, he decided to move to town. With ten or fifteen other boys, he rented sleeping quarters near the court house. They ate at "'Aunt Asher's," an octoroon who ran a high class restaurant for whites only. She was a fine old lady, made pets of the young men, and served us excellent meals at small cost."¹²⁴ Not surprisingly, lodging and eating facilities varied from bad to good for off-campus students.

¹²³Mamie Cross to Cammie Henry, February 27, 1934, Melrose Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹²⁴Harris, *Memoirs*, 60.



First literary society

Student life was regimented at the Normal with studies being of paramount importance. The school year was originally divided into two terms of three months each. The fall term began in November and ended in January, while the spring term encompassed February through April. Classes were held daily from Monday through Saturday except for Christmas week and certain state and national holidays. The class day began at 9:00 a.m. and continued until 2:15 p.m. with recesses at 10:45 a.m. and 12:45 p.m. The Saturday classes ended at noon. A major part of the classroom work consisted of carefully supervised student teaching in the practice school. A reading room (library) was immediately opened in 1885 for the use of students.¹²⁵ The practice school was replaced in 1894 by a model ungraded school which was typical of the country schools in which most Normal graduates would teach.¹²⁶ Students were promoted from one class to another at the close of the term after satisfactorily passing written and oral examinations in all studies pursued.¹²⁷

To develop both their educational and social capacities, sixty-eight Normal students formed a literary society, Seekers After Knowledge, in 1890 under the direction of Professor R.L. Himes. The organization's membership grew so rapidly that two years later a rival group, the Eclectic Literary Society, was founded by half of the membership of the S.A.K.¹²⁸ The two societies, composed of students, former students, and Normal teachers, held literary exercises on alternate Saturday evenings in the Normal Music Hall. In the early years the societies engaged in serious, competitive debates on contemporary issues at the annual commencements.¹²⁹ The literary societies became an integral part of student activities and eventually a component of the Normal's curriculum. In addition to an educational environment, the early Normal established "an atmosphere of refined and Christian morality" by encouraging students to attend one of the four churches in town and join their Sunday schools. To facilitate religious development, a Sunday school was held at the Normal every Sunday afternoon.¹³⁰

¹²⁵*Normal School Circular, 1885-1886*, 11, 13-14, 16. By 1890 the annual session consisted of two terms of four months each. The school year then began in October. *Report of the Board of Administrators, 1890*, 13.

¹²⁶*Normal School Catalogue, 1894-95*, 20.

¹²⁷*Normal School Circular, 1885-1886*, 14.

¹²⁸*Potpourri, 1910*, 62; Pettis, "Development of Louisiana State Normal College, 31; Crew, "History of Northwestern State College," 18. The colors of S.A.K. were purple and gold while those of E.L.S. were blue and white. A committee with representatives of both societies was appointed to choose school colors for the State Normal. They selected purple from S.A.K. and white from E.L.S.

¹²⁹*Normal School Circular, 1890-91*, 11; *Normal School Catalogue, 1894-95*, 11.

¹³⁰*Ibid.*, 34.

Discipline at the Normal was strict, although in the 1880s President Sheib did not believe in the use of compulsion. He felt that the students, seriously preparing to be teachers, should govern themselves and comply willingly with all regulations. Nevertheless, "Unladylike or ungentlemanly conduct" was punishable by expulsion.¹³¹ President Boyd agreed that discipline should be based on self-control, yet he instituted policies providing for the expulsion of students leaving before graduation without permission or valid excuse and the dropping of students from the rolls who were absent for one week without permission or valid excuse. "Habitual absence or neglect of study" could result in a request that the student withdraw from school.¹³² However, both presidents praised the good conduct of the Normal students. Colonel Boyd boastfully announced that in the first five years of his administration not one student had been expelled and only two had been asked to resign.¹³³ Perhaps this excellent record was due to the order President Boyd established at the Normal. "Everything about the State Normal School shows system and discipline and the pupils march at the tap of a drum."¹³⁴

Still another outstanding record the Normal established was the healthfulness of its students. Despite poor heating from fireplaces, no running water, and no electricity, there was not one death at the Normal during its first ten years and very few serious illnesses.¹³⁵ However, in 1896 the school was visited by an outbreak of measles in January and February and classes were suspended in March and April because of smallpox in Natchitoches.¹³⁶

The crowning achievement of the Normal in its early years was its graduates. Beginning with a graduation class of three, by 1894 the Normal had sent 148

¹³¹*Normal School Circular, 1885-1886*, 12.

¹³²*Normal School Circular, 1890-91*, 10.

¹³³*Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Education, 1884-85*, 197; Thomas D. Boyd to the Board of Administrators, May 29, 1893, Williamson Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

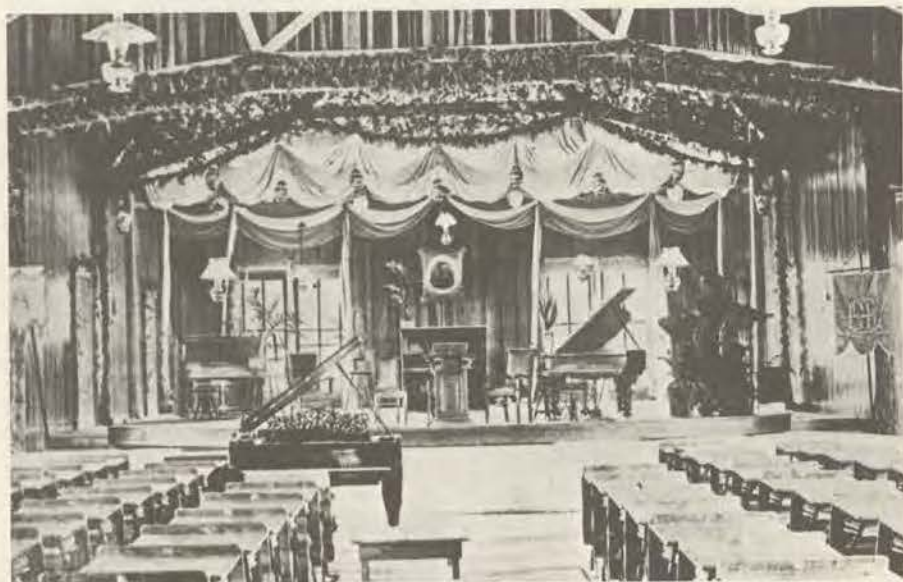
¹³⁴"Old Natchitoches. The Louisiana Press Association. The Fourteenth Meeting." *Louisiana Review* (1893), Melrose Scrapbook, #68, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana.

¹³⁵*Normal School Catalogue, 1894-95*, 21.

¹³⁶*Report of Louisiana State Normal School, 1896*, 4-5; Edwin Lewis Stephens "Excerpts from the Diary of a Teacher at the State Normal School, Session 1895-96" (typewritten copy), Williamson Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

Northwestern State University

trained teachers into the schools of Louisiana. That year 104 were still teaching despite the fact that twenty-seven had married and "thus passed into another sphere of usefulness to humanity." In May 1895 another nineteen joined the list



Commencement Stage

of graduates.¹³⁷ As T.H. Harris commented, "The establishment of the State Normal School was by far the most important thing ever done in the interest of public education."¹³⁸ Certainly President Boyd would have agreed with him. Early in his administration, President Boyd declared, "Education is not a growth from below upwards, but an emanation of light from above downwards."¹³⁹ In the 1880s and 1890s the State Normal School was providing the light that was driving the darkness of ignorance, poorly-trained teachers, and public apathy from the corridors of Louisiana's public schools.

¹³⁷Normal School Catalogue, 1894-95, 21.

¹³⁸T.H. Harris, *The Story of Public Education in Louisiana* (New Orleans, 1924), 64.

¹³⁹Thomas D. Boyd to Governor Francis T. Nicholls, April 20, 1892 (typewritten copy), Williamson Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

A Matter of Importance

Chapter III

"A MATTER OF IMPORTANCE"

The transfer of the State Normal administrative control from Colonel Thomas D. Boyd to Beverly C. Caldwell in the summer of 1896 was tranquil. For years the two men had worked together in the Teachers' Institutes and in 1894 President Boyd had brought Professor Caldwell to the Louisiana State Normal school in the dual role of State Institute Conductor and member of the faculty. Although very different in personality, Presidents Boyd and Caldwell shared the same educational philosophy and certainly the same dream — to make the State Normal serve the educational needs of the people of Louisiana. In fulfilling this aim, President Caldwell continued the institute program, intensified the expansion of the school's physical plant, improved student campus living conditions, modified the curriculum, and realized increased enrollment. Through twelve years of determination and dedication he guided the State Normal School into the twentieth century.

Beverly Caldwell was born July 12, 1856, in Hopkinsville, Kentucky, to Isaac H. and Evaline S. (Stites) Caldwell.¹ Isaac Caldwell practiced law, served briefly as Clerk of Adair County, and edited a newspaper in the small Kentucky town. With the outbreak of the Civil War, he, at the time a cashier in the Bank of Kentucky, decided to move his wife and seven children to Louisville where he engaged in a tobacco business. After the war, the Caldwell family moved to Carbondale, Illinois, where Isaac again practiced law and purchased a large farm. During these years his son, Beverly, received his education in Louisville and in a private school in Carbondale. In 1874 young Caldwell entered the first class of the newly-opened Southern Illinois Normal School. Two years later he completed his program of study and graduated as the youngest member of a class of five.²

Immediately entering teaching, Beverly C. Caldwell secured a position in Hickman, Kentucky, a small rural Mississippi River town. There he taught elementary and secondary subjects and later reminisced that his first school was in:

a primitive little community where the young people were all eager to learn; but I had a great many pupils who were older and much larger than I, mostly girls, but some of them boys and unruly ones too, although I must say that they never gave me any trouble in school. That was a rich

¹Elizabeth R. Caldwell to Roland Grass, March 19, 1959, Vertical File, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana. Cited hereafter as A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

²Ibid.; Eliot Stetson Knowles, Jr., "The Life and Career of Beverly C. Caldwell" (Ed.D. dissertation, Northwestern State University, 1972), 12-15. Cited hereafter as Knowles, "Caldwell." Knowles states that Caldwell's parents did not give him a middle name, but later he adopted Caldwell becoming Beverly Caldwell Caldwell.

experience for me, and I date many useful principles of my teaching from that halcyon summer and autumn when I was a boy among my boys and girls and lived with them as one of their own number.³

Adding immeasurably to the joy of his first teaching assignment was his marriage in 1886 to one of his students, fifteen-year-old Ida R. Underwood of Hickman. A few months later, he moved to Glasgow, Missouri, to serve as principal of a small rural school. There he broadened his teaching and administrative experience especially by taking part in teachers' institutes. In 1890 he learned of a vacancy in the principalship (which he successfully sought) of Moline High School in Moline, Illinois. For four years he administered the 104-student secondary school with notable success. In addition to taking a personal interest in his pupils, Principal Caldwell united the community in support of the school and improved the professional standards of his faculty by requiring them to attend state teachers' meetings and participate in "visiting days" whereby they observed methods used by other teachers.⁴

By 1890 Beverly C. Caldwell had also come to the attention of President Boyd who was looking for prominent educators to direct teachers' institutes in Louisiana. Because of his experience as teacher, principal, and especially as institute conductor in central Missouri as early as 1887, Mr. Caldwell was invited to conduct a small institute in Mount Lebanon, Louisiana, in June of 1890. The participants were twenty-one white teachers and one Negro teacher. The next year, together with Martin G. Brumbaugh of Pennsylvania, he participated in four Louisiana institutes with a total attendance of 233 teachers. The year 1893 brought even greater success. He, Brumbaugh, and R.L. Himes managed twelve institutes throughout Louisiana with a teacher enrollment of 1,055. Additionally Beverly Caldwell participated in the educational activities of the Ruston Chautauqua during these years. The reward for his endeavors came in 1894 when he was named first State Institute Conductor. In July he returned to Moline to move his wife and children to Natchitoches.⁵ During the next two years he continued his successful management of the institute program. He reached over one-third of Louisiana's teachers through institutes. He also interested the public in education by means of evening sessions designed to involve the parents in the public schools. One of his most significant achievements was the introduction of the four-week institute, the forerunner of the summer term at the Normal School. "This [institute] work," remarked President Boyd, "has been placed by Mr. Caldwell from the outset on the highest plane of excellence."⁶ In July 1896 Beverly C. Caldwell resigned his

³B.C. Caldwell to Miss Lillian Lee [Newman], [Fall or Winter, 1900], University Archives, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana. Original in the possession of James L. Newman, Beaumont, Texas. Cited hereafter as A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁴Elizabeth R. Caldwell to Roland Grass, March 19, 1959, Vertical File, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; Knowles, "Caldwell," 15-7.

⁵Ibid., 21-24; 27.

⁶Ibid., 28-30; 33.

position as State Institute Conductor to accept a still greater challenge, the presidency of the Louisiana State Normal School.

Assuming the presidency of the State Normal School at the age of forty, Beverly C. Caldwell had substantial teaching and administrative experience although he lacked an advanced degree which usually accompanied such a position. More importantly, he had a common-sense approach to teacher training and the role of the public school teacher. In describing the purpose of the Louisiana State Normal School, he declared, "It is distinctly a professional school, and all the training here given is expressly aimed to develop such powers as are demanded in the work of the school room."⁷ He noted that the difference between university work and study at the Normal was that the latter was individualized to meet a student's needs and to reflect his attainments. Nevertheless, the Normal School was much more to President Caldwell than merely a teacher training institution.

While it is the distinctive purpose of the school to train teachers, it is my sincere belief that no other course ever offered to young women affords a more thorough preparation for all the duties of womanhood, than the training given at the normal school. Even though a student should never become a teacher, she would have acquired here an interest in children and the means of developing human forces and character, that will stand her in good stead in any walk of life.⁸

While extolling the virtue of the Normal training, President Caldwell also gave down-to-earth advice to the institution's newly-graduated teachers who were discouraged by conditions in Louisiana's rural schools. To a young teacher in Iberia Parish he advised, "You have the two things necessary to do good teaching, the children to teach, and a good teacher to teach them; all else is only of secondary importance, blackboards, comfortable furniture, sunny rooms, good fires, reading books, busy work material, and all the rest." At the same time he admonished that "a thoroughly satisfied teacher is a mighty dangerous animal to turn loose upon the unsuspecting community of a first grade. I have profound distrust of the teacher who does not feel and wish that she could do more for 'these little people of God'."⁹ One condition that worried President Caldwell was the preference shown to men in the hiring practices of many school boards. To one woman teacher he declared, "If I only knew how to dress you up in a cutaway coat and palm you off for a man, I could put you into a ninety dollar position that you could fill more cred-

⁷B.C. Caldwell to Mrs. S.W. Turpin, December 9, 1898, Caldwell Papers, University Archives, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Natchitoches, Louisiana. Cited hereafter as A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁸Ibid.

⁹B.C. Caldwell to Miss Lillian Lee [Newman], [Fall or Winter, 1900], University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

itably than any man I have to recommend. But alas! the average school board doesn't know how much of a man's strength and resource may be hidden in womanly garb such as yours; and it insists on a man for every one of the most responsible places within its control. . . ."¹⁰ Sexual preference was not a practice at the Normal but even there a disparity in salaries was evident. The average salary paid to male teachers was \$1,250 for a session of eight months while women faculty members received only \$750 for the same services.¹¹ During the mid-Caldwell years women outnumbered men nineteen to seven on the faculty.¹²

Upon entering the duties of the Normal presidency, B.C. Caldwell's first concern was renovating the existing buildings which were in a state of disrepair either from age, cheap construction, or poor maintenance. The building needing the most immediate repair was the forty-year-old Convent Building. In 1896 President Caldwell received a legislative appropriation of forty-six hundred dollars to remodel the structure. Defective foundations were rebuilt, faulty brick work restored, and arches and lintels replaced. Plaster ceilings were replaced with corrugated wood, old galleries completely rebuilt, and the brick columns reconstructed. Interior wood work and ceilings were painted and walls papered. Proudly, President Caldwell exclaimed, "It is believed that this building is now in as good a condition as when it was erected forty years ago. . . ."¹³ At the same time the shingle roofs of the Dining Room and Matron's Building were replaced with metal as a fire safeguard.¹⁴

The next year, 1897, President Caldwell began work on the Dining Room (building). He obtained an appropriation of four thousand dollars from the Board of Administrators for the construction of a new, modernized kitchen, pantries, and an addition to the Dining Room. When the extension was completed it provided a large kitchen, serving room, two pantries, and a dining room seating two hundred persons. It provided nine bath rooms and four additional bedrooms, making a total of eight, for women boarders. For the comfort of the residents the bath rooms contained "full-length white porcelain-lined bath tubs, supplied with hot and cold cistern water." Because of his insistence on building new galleries connecting the new and old buildings, which served as fire escapes for the third floors, the cost of the entire addition was \$112.90 over the appropriation.¹⁵ The same year the Matron's Building was repainted and papered. It was refurnished with, in Caldwell's words,

¹⁰B.C. Caldwell to Miss Mary Craighead, January 18, 1899, Caldwell Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹¹B.C. Caldwell to President W.W. Parsons, October 24, 1898, *ibid.*

¹²B.C. Caldwell to Bureau of Education, Replies to Circular of August 7 [1903], 84, *ibid.*

¹³*Seventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La. 1898* (New Orleans, 1898), 5. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Seventh Biennial Report, 1898*.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 5-6.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 6; *Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches La. Catalogue, 1895-96, Announcement, 1896-97* (New Orleans, 1896), 74. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Catalogue, 1895-96*.

"the handsomest and most sanitary beds" being "six feet six inches long and three feet six inches wide. They are of white enameled iron with brass trimmings" and were fitted with "Woven wire steel springs, and the best Louisiana moss mattress of full size." The wash stands were also of white enameled iron with granite bowls and pitchers.¹⁶ Obviously, President Caldwell was proud of the new, lavish furnishings for he described them in detail in the school catalog.

Although rightly satisfied with his renovation projects, President Caldwell realized that the State Normal could not continue to grow unless new construction was begun. Urgently needed were a women's dormitory and a men's dormitory. Although the president supervised the building of two women's dormitories, East Hall in 1898 and West Hall in 1902, no living quarters were erected for men during his tenure. He also witnessed the erection of a Model School in 1900 and a new administration and classroom building, Caldwell Hall, begun in 1906 and completed two years later. Thus the Normal buildings increased from four to eight during the Caldwell years and demonstrated the president's foresighted building program. However, in each instance President Caldwell had to beg for appropriations and then skimp and save to build with less money than was desirable. In some cases he had to transfer funds from one purpose to another and violate other usual financial practices to achieve his objectives. Eventually, his actions in expanding the physical plant of the Normal were to be responsible in part for his removal from the presidency.

Beverly C. Caldwell's *modus operandi* in obtaining new buildings for the State Normal was first evident in the construction of East Hall. In his April 1898 biennial report, President Caldwell called attention to the need for a women's dormitory capable of housing sixty to one hundred students. He predicted that such a dormitory would be filled immediately by current residents living in overcrowded conditions and by new students entering the next fall.¹⁷ His pleas fell on deaf legislative ears; however, the General Assembly did appropriate five thousand dollars for improvements and fifteen hundred dollars for repairs at the Normal. Immediately the president approached the Board of Administrators with a request to use the sixty-five hundred dollars and other funds for a new dormitory, leaving other Normal needs to future legislative largesse. Upon obtaining board approval and building plans, President Caldwell opened bids for construction. But no contractor would undertake the work for the sum available, eight thousand dollars, so he, giving up his summer vacation, personally purchased materials, employed workmen, and supervised the construction from August to November 1898. Because of Caldwell's own involvement, East Hall cost \$8,460.76 to build, some two thousand dollars under the lowest contractor's bid. The three-story wooden dormitory con-

¹⁶*Ibid.*

¹⁷*Normal School Seventh Biennial Report, 1898*, 11.

tained a spacious arched reception room, bedrooms for eighty-eight students and ten teachers, eight bathrooms, individual clothes closets, and attic storage rooms for students' trunks. East Hall was completely filled when opened a week after the beginning of the 1898 fall session.¹⁸ The local newspaper gave President Caldwell proper recognition for his untiring efforts when it stated that a visitor to the Normal would see:

the beautiful structure that has gone up almost Alladin-like [*sic*] in a night, one will look unconsciously on the Genl. (Mr. Caldwell's) finger for the ring, and he must possess one, as two years in succession the buildings have gone up like magic under his planning and supervision and each little detail is perfect in itself.¹⁹

President Caldwell's "magic" was soon at work again. When he announced the completion of East Hall, the president pointed out the Normal's urgent need for a new model school. At the time the model school was housed in four rooms of Boyd Hall which were required for the overflowing Normal classes. He recommended a school building accommodating five hundred pupils and a curriculum that would include the entire public school course of instruction. For this purpose, President Caldwell requested a special appropriation of eighty-five hundred dollars for the building and fifteen hundred dollars for furnishings. Surprisingly, this time he received the entire sum. By the spring of 1901 the Model School was operational.²⁰ It contained ten classrooms, four large corridors, and ten cloakrooms. Each classroom was heated by a large open fire in one corner and a hot air heater in the opposite corner. The Model School's instruction encompassed kindergarten, eight grades, ungraded school, and high school. Thus any teaching position a Normal graduate might obtain was represented in the school. The Model School was a public school, open to any students from throughout the state and was under the supervision of trained teachers. For one hour each day the pupils were taught by practice teachers from the Normal classes.²¹

By 1900, the year the Model School was built, President Caldwell was again complaining of the lack of boarding facilities for women students. In the fall of 1901, because of increasing enrollment, the old rooms in the Convent and Dining Room buildings were reoccupied by boarders. Altogether there were available eighty-three rooms housing four students each, the Dining Room accommodations

¹⁸*Eighth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La., 1900* (New Orleans, 1900), 7-8. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Eighth Biennial Report, 1900*; *Shreveport Times*, July 30, 1898.

¹⁹*The Natchitoches Enterprise*, November 10, 1898.

²⁰*Normal School Eighth Biennial Report, 1900*, 13, 16; *Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education to the General Assembly, 1900-1901* (Baton Rouge, 1902), 234.

²¹*Sixteenth Annual Circular of Information of the State Normal School of Louisiana, Natchitoches, La., August, 1900. Catalogue of Students, 1899-1900, Alumni, 1885-1900. Announcements for Session, 1900-1901* (New Orleans, 1900), 17, 25. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Sixteenth Annual Circular, 1900*.

with three students each, and the large convent rooms with five or six to a room. Still, there was not enough room for the girls so the reception room, storerooms, bathrooms, and one corridor of the new dormitory, East Hall, were fitted out as temporary bedrooms. Even with these emergency measures, over one hundred girls in a six-month period were turned away from the club.²² At the time, President Caldwell noted that the schools of Louisiana required a total of four thousand teachers and that, since the average teacher taught for only four years, the state needed one thousand new teachers a year.²³ Still, the Normal was rejecting potential teachers because of a lack of dormitory space. The crisis was relieved temporarily in 1902 when a second women's dormitory, West Hall, was erected. It was of frame construction, similar in design to East Hall, and housed 104 boarders. The cost of the structure was ten thousand dollars. The dining room was also enlarged to seat 350 persons and the president's cottage was repaired and enlarged.²⁴

The same year that President Caldwell saw the second women's dormitory rise on campus, he argued that the Normal should provide similar living quarters for male students. He pointed out that the men had to obtain accommodations in boarding houses or in private homes which were more expensive and less conducive to study than campus facilities. Also "they [male students] have no watchful oversight nor helpful guidance, as the girls have who live in the club. They are therefore less regular in attendance, less correct in habits of study, and suffer more from sickness than the girls in the club." President Caldwell buttressed his argument by concluding that the schools of the state needed men. Most Louisiana boys, according to him, looked upon teaching only as a temporary employment to allow them later to enter the professions of law, medicine, or business. Yet, Louisiana needed "her own sons" to fill positions as principals, superintendents, and teachers, positions which were at the time being staffed by out-of-state men. So strongly did President Caldwell feel about a men's dormitory that he listed it above a girls' dormitory in urgency.²⁵ Despite his poignant arguments, which he repeated in his biennial reports of 1904 and 1906, President Caldwell received no funds for a men's dormitory at the State Normal.²⁶

²²*Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La., 1902* (New Orleans, 1902), 9. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Ninth Biennial Report, 1902*; *Seventeenth Annual Circular of Information of the State Normal School of Louisiana, Natchitoches, La., August, 1901. Catalogue of Students, 1900-1901. Alumni, 1885-1901. Announcements for Session, 1901-1902* (New Orleans, 1901), 34. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Seventeenth Annual Circular, 1901*.

²³*Ibid.*, 25.

²⁴*Tenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La., 1904* (New Orleans, 1904), 3. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Tenth Biennial Report, 1904*. John Oliver Pettis, "Development of the Louisiana State Normal College, 1884-1927" (M.A. thesis, Louisiana State University, 1927), 15.

²⁵*Normal School Ninth Biennial Report, 1902*, 9-10, 13.

²⁶*Eleventh Biennial Report of the State Normal School of Louisiana, 1906* (New Orleans, [1906]), 13-14. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Eleventh Biennial Report, 1906*.

One disappointment did not halt President Caldwell's expansion of the Normal's physical plant. In 1904 he boldly proclaimed to the General Assembly, "The time has now come for the Normal School to have a building worthy of the mission it is to fill."²⁷ Seven of the eight Normal buildings were wooden structures built to meet immediate needs rather than long-range goals. The one exception was the old brick Convent Building, but its north wall had recently cracked dangerously and all the girls had to be moved to other temporary quarters. President Caldwell felt that "the building will have to be taken down to avert disaster. . . ."²⁸ He planned to replace it with an imposing permanent brick or stone building worthy of the state's only teacher-training institution. He understood only too well his predecessors' inability to erect substantial buildings.

It was manifestly impossible to construct a brick or stone building for either purpose [dormitory or classroom] with the sum [\$10,000] appropriated. And each administration had to choose between a temporary building large enough to meet the demands of the hour, and a small permanent building that would not afford more than half of the accommodations needed.

It was the part of wisdom to meet present needs from year to year, and defer the permanent housing of the school to such time as the financial conditions of the State would permit the erection of a suitable building. That this time has now come is evidenced by the liberal appropriations made for permanent buildings for all the other State schools.

And the Normal School, training men and women solely for the service of the State, enrolling every year more students than any other state school, and through its graduates, reaching more of the homes and children of Louisiana than all the other schools together, confidently expects a suitable permanent building to be provided for it.²⁹

To build an appropriate permanent administrative-classroom structure, the Normal President requested eighty-five thousand dollars, but the General Assembly responded with an appropriation of only forty thousand dollars over a three-year period.³⁰ President Caldwell was not willing to wait that long to begin building. By August 1904 he had the Board of Administrators' approval to demolish the old brick Convent Building immediately and begin work on the new structure. The next day he wrote Favrot & Livaudais Ltd., a New Orleans firm that had earlier planned other Normal buildings, to come to Natchitoches for a consultation.³¹ At the same time he corresponded with the President of the State Normal

²⁷Normal School Tenth Biennial Report, 1904, 5.

²⁸Ibid., 5-6.

²⁹Ibid., 6.

³⁰Normal School Eleventh Biennial Report, 1906, 9.

³¹B.C. Caldwell to Favrot & Livaudais, August 11, 1904, Caldwell Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

School in Providence, Rhode Island, requesting the blueprints and material specifications of his school's administration building which Caldwell had admired a few years before on a trip to New England.³² Everything was ready to begin construction, but the legislative appropriation was too small to erect the type of building Caldwell envisioned. Therefore, in 1906, he again appealed for state funds, this time estimating that the building, eliminating expensive materials and costly decoration, would cost \$105,000.³³ He ordered usable brick and other materials from the old Convent saved and utilized in the new building to reduce cost still further. After two years, in 1906, the central section and north wing of the building were completed and occupied.³⁴

Still practicing every economy possible, President Caldwell once again had to ask the General Assembly for fifty-four thousand dollars in 1906 to complete the building. He received only thirty-eight thousand dollars but decided to go ahead with the work anyway with the approval of the school's board.³⁵ With the various state appropriations, money from the school's budget that could be spared, and personal loans made by the president himself, the Normal Building, soon to be designated Caldwell Hall, was completed in 1908 at the modest cost of \$119,000.³⁶ To pay off the final deficit on the building, the General Assembly appropriated \$17,200 that year.³⁷

Caldwell Hall occupied the most commanding position on Normal Hill. The structure was 285 feet long and seventy-one feet wide with four floors. The exterior walls were brick decorated with white stonework around windows, doors, and at corners. The roof was partially flat with numerous end gables as well as corners and points of white stonework. The building contained thirty-three classrooms, six cloakrooms, six storerooms, an eleven hundred-seat auditorium, a swimming pool in the basement and a gymnasium on the fourth floor as well as some smaller rooms. Caldwell Hall also included a central heating plant designed eventually to

³²B.C. Caldwell to Principal State Normal School, Providence, Rhode Island, August 11, 1904, *ibid.*

³³Normal School Eleventh Biennial Report, 1906, 9.

³⁴Knowles, "Caldwell," 45; *State Normal Catalog, Series III, No. 1, Whole No. 26, September, 1906, Register of Students, 1905-1906. Announcements, 1906-1907* (New Orleans, n.d.), 23. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Catalog, September, 1906*.

³⁵*Twelfth Biennial Report of the State Normal School of Louisiana, 1908* (New Orleans, n.d.), 11. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Twelfth Biennial Report, 1908*.

³⁶Knowles, "Caldwell," 46; Pettis, "Development of State Normal College," 16. The Rhode Island State Normal School Building which served as a model for Caldwell Hall cost \$725,000.

³⁷"An Act to appropriate the sum of seventeen thousand two hundred dollars (\$17,200.00) to pay the deficiency in the appropriation for the State Normal Building at Natchitoches for 1906," *Acts Passed by The General Assembly of the State of Louisiana at The Regular Session Begun and Held in the City of Baton Rouge on The Eleventh Day of May, 1908* (Baton Rouge, 1908), 198.

supply all buildings on campus.³⁸ Over the entrance to the central section was the inscription "State Normal School, 1906" chiseled in the stonework. For years this building represented the old Normal and the later University to thousands of graduates.



Caldwell Hall

In addition to building renovation and construction, other campus facilities were modernized during the Caldwell years. Although water had been pumped from springs two miles from campus beginning in 1897, the president was very concerned with the lack of an adequate pure water supply for the school's needs. The school's cisterns, still the major source of water, were inadequate, especially in the summer and fall months. Besides ordinary inconveniences to campus residents, the meager water supply posed a fire danger. Therefore, President Caldwell asked for funding to construct an artesian well with suitable pump, engine, and reservoir to supplement the water supply.³⁹ As usual the legislature did not appropriate the funds immediately, but by 1900 a well, after many setbacks, was drilled to a depth of 726 feet and began providing abundant water. Unfortunately the water was too salty for drinking, but usable in bathing, sewage disposal, and fire tanks.⁴⁰ Finally, the Normal School connected with the City of Natchitoches waterworks in the summer of 1901. Even then, President Caldwell continued to extoll the immense supply of salt water as "equal to sea water for bathing purposes."⁴¹

³⁸George A. Stokes, "National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form for Normal Hill Site," April 4, 1979, in possession of the author; Knowles, "Caldwell," 46. Tragically, Caldwell Hall burned to the ground on October 18, 1982. Because of its sentimental value to thousands of Northwestern State University's graduates through the years, President Joseph J. Orze has expressed the hope of eventually rebuilding the structure using some of the original bricks and the same design.

³⁹B.C. Caldwell to Dr. N. Himel, August 15, 1904, Caldwell Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U; *Normal School Seventh Biennial Report*, 1898, 11-12.

⁴⁰*Normal School Eighth Biennial Report*, 1900, 8.

⁴¹*Shreveport Times*, April 9, 1901; *Normal School Seventeenth Annual Circular*, 1901, 35.

Besides a steady water supply, the State Normal desperately needed an adequate sewage disposal system. When the Normal was small, outdoor closets, although inconvenient, served the school. By 1898 President Caldwell considered the Normal's sewage disposal "insufficient and unsafe" and asked for \$1,350 for laying sewer pipes. Receiving no positive response, in 1902 he described the Normal as "almost a town by itself, having a population of over seven hundred people" and called the sewage problem "serious." Although some indoor plumbing had been installed in new buildings, the outdoor closets still in use were, of necessity, some distance from the buildings causing students hardships in bad weather. Additionally they were expensive to maintain, costing about sixty dollars a month to disinfect the facilities every night. The president estimated that a 2,950-foot sewer line carrying waste to Cane River and "sanitary water closets" would cost forty-four hundred dollars.⁴² In 1908 he repeated his funding request for a sewer system to make the indoor toilets of Caldwell Hall effective and provide similar facilities for other buildings.⁴³ No adequate sewage disposal system was provided the Normal until after President Caldwell left the school.⁴⁴

The heating and lighting systems of the Normal also required modernization during Caldwell's tenure. Heating was generally provided by fireplaces and wood burning stoves. "With the large group of wooden buildings, containing 145 stoves and 27 open fireplaces, the fire risk is little less than appalling," declared President Caldwell in 1904 when he was seeking a six thousand dollar appropriation for a steam heating plant.⁴⁵ Four years later Caldwell Hall's central heating plant was providing steam heat to two buildings and the president wanted to extend its capacity and install radiators in other Normal buildings at a cost of seventy-five hundred dollars.⁴⁶ However, the improved steam heating plant was not realized during President Caldwell's tenure,⁴⁷ and an adequate electric lighting system was still several years in the future, although President Caldwell introduced a few electric lights to replace oil lamps on the campus.⁴⁸

While expanding and improving the Normal's physical plant, President Caldwell significantly altered the school's curriculum by introducing an elective plan and new courses. In 1901 the new elective system was inaugurated. A student earned one credit for a term's (four months) satisfactory work in a subject and

⁴²*Normal School Seventh Biennial Report*, 1898, 12; *Normal School Ninth Biennial Report*, 1902, 10-11.

⁴³*Normal School Twelfth Biennial Report*, 1908, 11.

⁴⁴[Catalogue] *Session 1908-1909, Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La. October 1st 1908 — May 12, 1909* (Baton Rouge, 1908), 10. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Catalogue, Session 1908-1909*; *Shreveport Times*, September 7, 1908, September 23, 1908.

⁴⁵*Normal School Tenth Biennial Report*, 1904, 8.

⁴⁶*Normal School Twelfth Biennial Report*, 1908, 11.

⁴⁷*Normal School Catalogue, Session 1908-1909*, 10; *Shreveport Times*, September 7, 1908, September 23, 1908.

⁴⁸Knowles, "Caldwell," 49.

capable students usually garnered five credits a term or ten a year. For subjects entailing only two periods a week, such as singing, drawing, biology laboratory, and others, a half credit was given. A total of forty credits was required for graduation. Before 1901 every student was forced to take all the courses prescribed in the curriculum with no exceptions or substitutes allowed. After the curriculum modification, a student was required to take only twenty-eight prescribed courses while selecting the other twelve "to meet his individual needs or to qualify him for the special line of teaching he may expect to undertake."⁴⁹ The number of credits in compulsory courses were: six in English, mathematics, and professional subjects; two in history, natural science, drawing, singing, and Latin. The optional or elective credits were: six in French, Spanish, and natural science and laboratory work; four in Latin, violin, and piano; two in English, mathematics, drawing and water color, and singing; one in laboratory psychology and sociology; and six in special training for primary, intermediate, or high school teaching to be taken only after graduation and occupying a student's entire term. A student could choose his elective subjects only with the approval of the president. No elective course could replace a required one and a student could take more, but not less, than forty credits for graduation. Students with a first grade teacher's certificate and graduates of accredited high schools upon entering the Normal received twenty credits, those with a second grade teacher's certificate ten credits, and graduates of Louisiana State University, Tulane, or other similar institutions thirty credits.⁵⁰ Thus some students were able to finish the Normal course in as little as one year (two four-month terms). President Caldwell was pleased with the elective plan stating, "This has yielded good results and . . . will be extended still further as experience with the present course may indicate."⁵¹

Within a few years President Caldwell began expanding the Normal's offerings by adding such courses as gymnastics, reading and public speaking, writing and spelling, and agricultural and manual training.⁵² The agricultural and manual training courses he felt were most progressive since "The most important trend of educational development at this time is in the direction of making the public schools more practical, giving it a closer connection with the home life of the children. Gardening, agriculture, nature study and various forms of hand-training, are the subjects most used to this important end."⁵³ Physical activity on the cam-

⁴⁹ *Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Education, 1900-1901*, 234; *Normal School Seventeenth Annual Circular, 1901*, 7; *Shreveport Times*, July 29, 1901.

⁵⁰ *Normal School Seventeenth Annual Circular, 1901*, 7-8. The course offerings expanded throughout the Caldwell years especially in elective subjects.

⁵¹ *Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Education, 1900-1901*, 234.

⁵² *State Normal School, Summer Term, 1904* (n.p., [1904]), n.p. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Summer Term, 1904*; *State Normal School, Summer Term, 1905* (New Orleans, [1905]), n.p. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Summer Term, 1905*.

⁵³ *State Normal School Circular, Series III, N. 3, Whole No., 28, April, 1908* (New Orleans, 1908), n.p. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Circular, April, 1908*.

pus was also emphasized. In 1896 President Caldwell directed the students' attention to the Normal's "excellent" football field, baseball grounds, two basketball courts, two tennis courts, and numerous shaded walks. Again in 1903 he described the outdoor "exercise grounds" adding fishing and boating in Chaplin's Lake to the list of activities.⁵⁴ By 1905 every student was required to engage in two hours of physical activity a week for two terms.⁵⁵ That year recreational facilities were enlarged further with the addition of an outdoor swimming pool utilizing the salt water from the artesian well⁵⁶ and again in 1908 with the indoor pool in Caldwell Hall. Not only were undergraduate offerings expanded, but a new graduate course was announced in the 1906 catalog. The fifth year, beginning in 1907, consisted of advanced work for high school instructors, principals, and superintendents.⁵⁷

Undoubtedly the most noteworthy change in the organization of the Normal School under President Caldwell was the introduction of a summer term. In his third annual report of 1898-1899, the president suggested that the Normal go into a twelve-month operation; however, it was not until 1900 that he listed the benefits of a summer term. Among those mentioned were: (1) the use of the vast one hundred thousand dollar Normal complex for the entire year equaling an additional state investment of fifty thousand dollars, (2) the opportunity for in-service teachers to up-date or complete their training thereby not losing their positions to better-trained teachers, (3) the opportunity for regular students to complete the Normal course in three instead of four years, (4) the inexpensiveness of a summer term, and (5) an increase in the supply of teachers to fill the annual demand in Louisiana.⁵⁸

In 1902 the General Assembly approved the twelve-month operation for the Normal and the school year was then divided into three terms of four months each with the first summer term beginning June 1 and ending September 18, 1903. The course of study, credits, and faculty were the same as for the fall and spring term.

⁵⁴ *Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La. Catalogue, 1896-1897. Announcement, 1897-1898* (Lake Charles, [1897]), 64; *Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, Summer Term, June 1st-September 18th 1903* (n.p., [1903]), n.p. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Summer Term, 1903*.

⁵⁵ Eva Lee Moss Martin, "A History of the Women's Physical Education Program at Northwestern State University from 1885 to 1940, and the Contributions of Mrs. Thelma Zelenka Kyser to Physical Education" (M.A. thesis, Northwestern State University, 1970), 13-14.

⁵⁶ Knowles, "Caldwell," 48-49. This was the first swimming pool on the campus of a Louisiana school.

⁵⁷ *Normal School Catalog, September, 1906*, 24. Whether this course was actually instituted is unclear, since in 1908 Caldwell was again requesting it. *Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Education, 1906-1907* (Baton Rouge, 1908), 121. Additionally President Caldwell instituted "cadetships" for outstanding students. A "cadetship" entailed four months post-graduate training in charge of one of the rooms of the Model School. It was an honor to be selected a "cadet" teacher and, since it carried a stipend of twenty dollars a month, the "cadetship" resembled a present day assistantship. B.C. Caldwell to Supt. John Marks, September 16, 1903, Caldwell Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁵⁸ *Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education To The General Assembly, 1896-97* (Baton Rouge, 1898), 117; *Normal School Eighth Biennial Report, 1900*, 11-12.

Interestingly, President Caldwell felt it necessary to state in the first summer term catalog that "The summer term is not a holiday school, not an assembly for recreation, with incidental training; but it will have many of the attractions offered by summer resorts and none of the distractions."⁵⁹ Still, special activities were planned for the summer term including lectures, musical entertainments, nature trips, and visits to historical places.⁶⁰ If that were not enough to entice students to attend, the 1904 Normal added special courses such as nature study, taxidermy, photography, Bible studies, and an educational trip. There was no charge for special courses, but they also carried no credit toward graduation. The trip arranged for the summer of 1904 was to the St. Louis World Fair. A group of 201 Normalites, properly chaperoned by the matron and faculty members, made the ten-day trip at a cost of thirty-four dollars per person. They traveled on a special train which took them from the Normal grounds directly to St. Louis without a change of trains.⁶¹ The special courses became a permanent feature of the Normal summer term but the educational trips did not. In 1905 a trip was planned to attend the National Educational Association's meeting in Asbury Park, New Jersey, with side trips to Washington, Philadelphia, New York, and Niagara Falls, but in 1906 a trip to San Francisco was cancelled.⁶² The summer term was an immediate success with average attendance of more than four hundred students and with thirty-six graduates during the summer terms of President Caldwell's tenure.⁶³

With everything apparently running smoothly at the Normal, President Caldwell was suddenly asked to resign in June 1908 by the newly elected governor, Jared Y. Sanders. Months later he recalled the events of that fateful day:

About the 15th of June Governor Sanders telegraphed me from New Orleans to meet him in Baton Rouge. Next morning I met him in his office in the capitol, and he informed me that he intended to reorganize the Nor-

⁵⁹*Normal School Summer Term, 1903*, n.p.; "An Act Making appropriations to defray the ordinary expenses of the government; to pay the interest on the public debt, and to support public schools and public charities in the State of Louisiana; to build and repair public levees, and to maintain the State penitentiary for the year commencing July 1st, 1902 and ending June 30th, 1903, and for the year commencing July 1st, 1903 and ending June 30th, 1904. *Acts Passed by The General Assembly of the State of Louisiana At The Regular Session Begun and Held in the City of Baton Rouge on the Twelfth Day of May, 1902* (Baton Rouge, 1902), 127.

⁶⁰*Normal School Summer Term, 1903*, n.p.

⁶¹*Normal School Summer Term, 1904*, n.p.; *Normal School Summer Term, 1905*, n.p.; *The Shreveport Times*, June 30, 1904. The special courses varied somewhat from summer to summer. In 1905 an eight-week review course for teachers, who also had to be enrolled in the regular Normal summer term, was added to help prepare them for the parish certificate examination in August. *State Normal School, Summer Term, 1906* (New Orleans, [1906]), n.p. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Summer Term, 1906*.

⁶²*Normal School Summer Term, 1905*, n.p.; *Normal School Summer Term, 1906*, n.p.

⁶³*Normal School Circular, April, 1908*, n.p. President Caldwell called the summer term an "experiment" since, as far as he knew, it had never been tried in any Southern school, and only once in the North at the State Normal School at Winoona, Minnesota. *Normal School Tenth Biennial Report, 1904*, 4.

mal School Board, and that I would not be reappointed.

I had voted against him in the race for governor and I accepted my dismissal without demur.

He asked me when my term would expire and on my replying August 1 he told me I might [go] or continue to the end of the summer term, September 18th. I decided to get out August 1st.⁶⁴

For nearly two weeks no news of the president's dismissal reached the public. But then the New Orleans *States* leaked a rumor of his ouster which the *Natchitoches Times* republished on June 26, 1908. The article indicated that Caldwell was removed for not supporting Sanders in his election bid, and in a gross understatement, concluded, "The news will create something of a sensation in educational circles."⁶⁵ Already whispers of the impending removal of the Normal School president abounded on the streets of Natchitoches. Unable to ascertain anything definite, some citizens went to President Caldwell himself to learn the truth. He admitted to them that the governor had sent for him to request his resignation. Outraged, a meeting of citizens decided to send a delegation to Baton Rouge to ask Governor Sanders to rescind his decision. Speculation was rife among the local citizens as to the governor's reasons for removing a highly successful and popular educational leader. Anti-Sanders people felt it was crass partisan politics while the governor's friends believed he must have good, although unknown, reasons for his action. Others thought that Caldwell had acted unwisely in openly sympathizing with the governor's opponent in the last election; still others believed that complaints concerning Caldwell's administration had reached the governor. Meanwhile, the committee of citizens met with no success in persuading Governor Sanders to retain President Caldwell.⁶⁶

As long as the governor remained silent, public sentiment developed in favor of Mr. Caldwell. The teachers attending the Normal summer schools at Gibsland, Marthaville, and Lake Charles unanimously passed resolutions supporting the Normal president while the press throughout the state favored him and praised his work at the Normal.⁶⁷ Ironically, even the Board of Administrators, with Governor Sanders presiding, adopted resolutions recognizing President Caldwell's excellent leadership of the Normal School.

Whereas Dr. B.C. Caldwell is about to retire from the presidency of the Louisiana State Normal School and,

⁶⁴*The Natchitoches Enterprise*, November 26, 1908. *The Natchitoches Enterprise* was pro-Caldwell. The newspaper prefaced its publication of President Caldwell's reply to Governor Sanders' charges with this statement "Next to the completeness of the proof by which Mr. Caldwell's statements are sustained, the other most notable feature of the paper is the calm dignity, perfect courtesy and rare frankness which characterize it."

⁶⁵*The Natchitoches Times*, June 26, 1908.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, June 26, 1908; July 3, 1908.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, July 3, 1908.

Whereas he has filled that position for the past twelve years with signal ability and to the great advantage and success of this institution and to the betterment and advancement of the educational interests of the State, therefore be it resolved by the Board of Administrators in session this July 28th, 1908,

That this Board for itself and on behalf of the people of the State now tenders to Dr. Caldwell this expression of its appreciation of his valuable and untiring services to the school and to the educational interests of the State and that these resolutions be spread on the minutes of the Board and that a copy be handed to Dr. Caldwell by the Secretary.⁶⁸

A few days later on August 3, the town bade farewell to its popular Normal president at an overflowing reception in the Opera House. Presided over by Judge C.V. Porter, Dr. Z.T. Gallion, and D.C. Scarborough, all staunch supporters and close friends of the retiring president, the night was filled with the praises of Mr. Caldwell as an exemplary neighbor, businessman, citizen, community leader, and, of course, educator. As a going-away memento the town presented him a watch with the inscription: "To B.C. Caldwell from the Citizens of Natchitoches in token of their sincere appreciation of him as a man and an educator." The departing president responded with an emotion-filled talk of "sweet sadness." "... the meeting was truly a love feast the memory of which will no doubt live in the hearts of ourselves and Mr. Caldwell for many a day."⁶⁹ The ex-president carried no bitterness and, as he wrote one of his former pupils "... you may be sure I shall carry with me a happy remembrance and deep interest in you and the others I have known and loved as my pupils here."⁷⁰ B.C. Caldwell returned to his home in Kentucky where he planned to relax before seeking another position.⁷¹

Suddenly in November 1908 Governor Sanders, because of continuing criticism of his action, broke silence on the Caldwell dismissal. In a release to the state press, the governor proclaimed: "I have found that the finances at the state normal school, under President Caldwell, were in a most deplorable condition. My investigations have revealed the fact that there is not a voucher of any kind or description in existence to show how the state's money has been spent. From the books of Mr. Caldwell we have been unable to determine how much the normal school owed. It is criminal negligence, because not a dollar of the state's money can be traced." The governor also charged that the ex-president had kept his own herd of swine and cattle on the Normal grounds, fed them from the products of the state farm,

⁶⁸Minutes, Board of Administrators, State Normal School of Louisiana (typewritten), 83, University Archives, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana. Cited hereafter as A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁶⁹*The Natchitoches Times*, August 7, 1908.

⁷⁰B.C. Caldwell to Bertha Haupt, July 8, 1908, Caldwell Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁷¹*The Natchitoches Enterprise*, November 26, 1908.

and then sold the resulting dairy products to the Normal Club as "a personal enterprise." He concluded: "I was in possession of sufficient facts to warrant me in my conclusion that conditions at the state Normal were in bad shape when I removed Mr. Caldwell. Subsequent investigations have more than borne out that belief." The investigation alluded to by Governor Sanders was one he had ordered conducted by the State Bank Examiner, W.L. Young. Mr. Young reported that the books of the club, in fact of the entire institution, were so poorly kept that it was impossible to determine accurately the financial condition of the school. He estimated that the Normal's deficit in building Caldwell Hall was nearly ten thousand dollars over the \$17,200 figure appropriated by the General Assembly in 1908 to clear the school's building debt. Additionally, the school had borrowed \$15,844.74 from the Normal Club, making a total debt of more than twenty-five thousand dollars.⁷²

A "fresh sensation" again swept the state after the governor's public statements. B.C. Caldwell, relaxing in Kentucky, was not officially informed of the charges against him, but his friends sent him copies of state newspapers carrying the governor's interview. He immediately returned to Natchitoches to prepare a refutation of the published charges. In his defense, Mr. Caldwell explained that "never a dollar of the school's money passes through the hands of the president" but rather it was handled by the school's treasurer whose books were audited by the Board of Administrators and published periodically. The club's money, on the other hand, was administered by the school's president. After this general explanation, he answered the specific charges leveled by Governor Sanders against his administration. Concerning the debt, he explained that it had resulted from the completion of the new Normal Building (Caldwell Hall).

The creation of the deficit was not 'criminal negligence.' It was a deliberate plan, approved by the State Superintendent of Education, the Governor, the Building Committee and the Board of Administrators, and recognized by the General Assembly in the appropriation made for it.

It gave to Louisiana, at the moment of her urgent need, adequate facilities for supplying trained teachers to the public schools; and it gave to the State, certainly two years earlier and possibly many years earlier, the largest, handsomest, and best Normal School building in the Southern States.⁷³

Taking up the charges that he had kept swine and cows on the Normal grounds and made money from selling the resulting dairy products to the school, Mr. Caldwell admitted the existence of the herds, but he explained that the animals were

⁷²*The Shreveport Times*, November 13, 1908. Several weeks earlier *The Natchitoches Times* published a rumor that Governor Sanders would "throw an 'honorable bomb' under Prof. B.C. Caldwell that will silence the protests of that gentleman's friends over his removal as President of the Natchitoches Normal School." *The Natchitoches Times*, October 23, 1908.

⁷³*The Natchitoches Enterprise*, November 26, 1908.

fed only grass cleared from the school's lawns and ditches, and that it was not "a private business conducted for profit." He acknowledged that beginning in 1897-98 after the outbreak of typhoid fever in the club which was traced to infected milk and continuing for nine or ten years his herd roamed the campus. However, he claimed he received no profit from the sale of milk and butter to the club until the school went to a twelve-month operation in 1903, and even then "This was no 'personal enterprise.' It was a life and death matter to the hundreds of girls put in my care by the people of Louisiana." In regard to the governor's charge of a lack of financial records at the Normal, Mr. Caldwell pointed out, in opposition to the Sanders' claims, that Bank Examiner Young found the books and supporting documents in proper condition through May 13, 1908, when they were last examined by the Finance Committee of the Board of Administrators. The ex-president disputed the ten thousand dollar deficit on the new building found by Mr. Young although he did admit a \$2,207.04 deficiency exclaiming "... to keep within two thousand dollars of the estimates is a feat accomplished in no other public building in Louisiana of similar character and cost within my knowledge." Finally, he acknowledged that the club's books were kept in an unprofessional manner but claimed that they were in order and substantiated by vouchers and cancelled checks. In conclusion, Mr. Caldwell asked the businessmen of the state to judge whether a school with "a cash balance of \$19,119.32" and club with "a surplus of \$18,117.24" exemplified "a most deplorable condition of the finances of the school." Likewise, he called upon the parents of two thousand Normal School girls to determine "if conditions at the State Normal School were in bad shape..." when in his twelve years there was never "an accident, never a burglary, a fire or a panic, never an epidemic, never a strike or rebellion against authority, never a girl expelled, never a runaway, elopement, or scandal."⁷⁴ Every newspaper carrying Mr. Caldwell's reply was eagerly bought up in Natchitoches.⁷⁵

With so many people reading Mr. Caldwell's impressive reply, Governor Sanders felt that once again he had to substantiate his charges against the popular ex-president. Denying that politics had anything to do with his decision to let Caldwell go, the governor requested the Normal School's Board of Administrators, which he had reorganized at the time of Caldwell's dismissal, to attend a special meeting November 30 in Natchitoches to investigate the facts of both Mr. Young's report and Mr. Caldwell's reply to it. "Mr. Caldwell's statements are correct or incorrect," declared Governor Sanders. "If correct, then Mr. Young has blundered seriously." He vowed to "use every power in my command at this meeting to see that no injustice is done anyone and see that no one is shielded from merited public criticism, no matter what his previous standing and character may have been." The governor insisted that he acted "for the best interests of all the people of the state"

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵*The Shreveport Times*, November 28, 1908.

when he requested the Normal president's resignation. To insure a fair hearing before the board, Governor Sanders ordered the State Bank Examiner and State Traveling Auditor to be present. He also invited Mr. Caldwell to attend and participate and he readily accepted.⁷⁶ Senator T.C. Barret, a former board member and supporter of Caldwell, and James B. Aswell, also a former board member and Caldwell's replacement as president, likewise decided to attend to aid in the investigation.⁷⁷ Since the meeting was public, the state press was also well represented.⁷⁸

Unfortunately for B.C. Caldwell, the Board of Administrators, after hearing all parties concerned, upheld the charges of Governor Sanders. With the governor presiding, the board examined Mr. Young's report, Mr. Caldwell's reply, and Governor Sanders' interview with the *Shreveport Times*. They also heard Mr. Young testify and defend his report, Mr. Caldwell make a statement and answer questions, and Senator Barret and Judge Porter address the meeting. After all testimony was heard, Governor Sanders appointed a three-man committee of board members consisting of Frank Bernstein, T.H. Harris, and G.W. Jack to conduct a further inquiry and report back to the board as soon as possible. The governor invited Messrs. Caldwell, Barret, and Porter to accompany the investigative committee in its inquiry and put Bank Examiner Young and Auditor Archie Smith at the committee's disposal. On December 1, 1908, the investigative committee submitted its report which concluded (1) that the debt of the Normal School was \$25,021.82, (2) that the club did not have sufficient money to pay its current bills and that it had "loaned" the school \$17,729.94 during the Caldwell years, (3) that the books of the school and club were not properly kept and preserved, (4) that President Caldwell borrowed twenty-five hundred dollars from the club in 1905 to purchase a plantation which he repaid partly in cash and the remainder, eleven hundred dollars, at the end of his administration by charging it off as payment for dairy products, (5) that President Caldwell made a loan of club funds amounting to \$2,637.08 to the Crystal Ice Company of which he was president and which was repaid, (6) that President Caldwell bought stock in the Crystal Ice Company with club funds, and (7) that the club's dormitories were badly in need of repair and new furnishings. The committee concluded its report by requesting that Governor Sanders assemble the State Board of Liquidation to find a means of paying off the \$25,021.82 current debt of the State Normal School.⁷⁹ As the *Natchitoches Times*

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Ibid., November 29, 1908.

⁷⁸Minutes of Board of Administrators, 91, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁷⁹Ibid., 84-91; *The Shreveport Times*, December 1, 1908, December 2, 1908. All members of the Board of Administrators were present except A.J. Lafargue of Avoyelles. They were Governor Sanders, State Superintendent T.H. Harris, President Aswell of the Normal School, Henry Bernstein of Ouachita, S. Farnbacher of Baton Rouge, G.W. Jack of Shreveport, Dr. L. Fourceaud of St. Martin, and Dr. Z.T. Gallion of Natchitoches.

stated, "The Committee report was extremely unfavorable to Dr. Caldwell" and "it was apparent that the Governor's charges of negligence and irregularities would be hard to overcome."⁸⁰

After the board meeting of December 1, Governor Sanders left for Shreveport while Bank Examiner Young and State Auditor Smith remained in Natchitoches to continue their investigation of the Normal books. Once again they made a startling discovery — that on September 29, 1904, President Caldwell had charged the Normal club twice for \$1,039.50 worth of milk. At the time the former president's bank account was overdrawn and he was in debt. The two fiscal agents, accompanied by State Superintendent Harris, informed Mr. Caldwell of the double charge whereupon he immediately admitted the error and offered to make restitution with interest. Governor Sanders was called back to Natchitoches where he convened a quorum of the Board of Administrators which agreed to accept Mr. Caldwell's repayment.⁸¹ Three days later the State Board of Liquidation, meeting in Baton Rouge, authorized Governor Sanders to borrow thirty-eight thousand dollars of which twenty-five thousand dollars was to clear the debt of the Normal School.⁸² State newspapers continued to publish articles on the "Caldwell Affair" throughout December. Some speculated that the Natchitoches Grand Jury might indict ex-President Caldwell. However, on December 11 the grand jury ended its session with no reference to the "Caldwell Affair."⁸³ In January 1909 State Bank Examiner Young and State Auditor Smith completed their investigation and submitted their final report to the governor. It repeated the earlier charges, and included a few new ones, against Mr. Caldwell.⁸⁴ Finally, with this report, the unfortunate affair was ended.

As regrettable as the "Caldwell affair" was and as damaging as it may have been to the ex-president's personal reputation, the Normal School suffered no lasting damage from the scandal. In fact, President Caldwell's improvements and expansion of the school's plant provided a foundation for continued growth in the twentieth century. His innovative ideas, such as the elective system and summer school term, became permanent features of the Normal's operation. And, after all, President Caldwell's "unusual" fiscal practices had been approved periodically by the Board of Administrators and its various committees. Although Caldwell's actions, especially his profiting from his position, cannot be condoned, the "negligence" in the Normal operation rested as much with the state's fiscal system, or lack of one, as with any individual. Even Governor Sanders admitted as much

⁸⁰*The Natchitoches Times*, December 4, 1908.

⁸¹*Ibid.*; *The Shreveport Times*, December 3, 1908; December 5, 1908.

⁸²*The Shreveport Times*, December 6, 1908.

⁸³*Ibid.*, December 6, 1908, December 12, 1908; *The Natchitoches Times*, December 18, 1908, December 11, 1908.

⁸⁴*The Shreveport Times*, January 17, 1909.

when he ordered an examination of all state boards and institutions and requested additional personnel to carry out the project.⁸⁵

While the "Caldwell Affair" was being aired throughout the state, the Louisiana State Normal School fortunately had a new president at its helm who was quietly restoring tranquility, dignity, and fiscal order to the school's operation. On July 28, 1908, the Board of Administrators elected James Benjamin Aswell president of the State Normal School for a four-year term beginning August 1, 1908. His salary was four thousand dollars annually with the fringe benefits of residence in the president's home, paid utilities, and free food from the Normal farm.⁸⁶ Serving only three years before resigning his position in 1911 to campaign for governor, J.B. Aswell overcame local pro-Caldwell opposition to his presidency while continuing the expansion of the school and upgrading its academic standards. A man of great reknown in Louisiana educational circles, he used his vast array of talents to better teacher training at the Normal School.

James Benjamin Aswell was born December 23, 1869, on a rural, hill farm near Arcadia in Jackson Parish to Benjamin and Elizabeth (Lyles) Aswell. Performing farm chores all day, the Aswell children gathered at night around their mother who taught them. Later James attended a rural school at Longstraw and in 1886 entered Arcadia Male and Female College for secondary schooling. After a year the college closed and Aswell began his teaching career at Flat Creek School, near Eros, in Jackson Parish. There the school term was three months and young Aswell's salary thirty dollars a month. Because of his outstanding work he received a two-year scholarship to Peabody Normal in Nashville, Tennessee, where he earned the Licentiate of Instruction diploma and in 1893 the B.A. degree. In 1897 he enrolled briefly in the University of Chicago but failed to finish the course of study. He received no more formal education after 1897 but was recognized with an honorary M.A. degree from Peabody Normal in 1900 and an honorary LL.D. from the University of Arkansas in 1908.⁸⁷

Armed with his newly received B.A. degree, James B. Aswell returned to teaching in Louisiana in 1893. For the next four years he served as teacher and principal

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, December 5, 1908, December 6, 1908. Unwilling to retire, in 1908 B.C. Caldwell became Field Director for the Jeanes Fund dedicated to the upgrading of rural Negro education in the South. In 1911 he accepted a similar position with the Slater Fund serving in a dual capacity until his retirement July 1, 1931. During this time he frequently visited friends in Natchitoches. He died January 2, 1946, at age ninety. Knowles, "Caldwell," 100-10.

⁸⁶Minutes of Board of Administrators, 82-83, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁸⁷Monnie T. Cheves, "The Educational and Political Career of James Benjamin Aswell" (M.A. thesis, Louisiana State University, 1937), 3-6. Cited hereafter as Cheves, "Educational and Political Career of Aswell;" Sandra Kate Stringer, "James Benjamin Aswell: Louisiana Educator and Politician" (M.A. thesis, Louisiana State University, 1970), 1-3. Cited hereafter as "Aswell: Educator and Politician;" Rodney Cline, *Pioneer Leaders and Early Institutions in Louisiana Education* (Baton Rouge, 1969), 9. Cited hereafter as Cline, *Pioneer Leaders and Early Institutions*; "James Benjamin Aswell," *Biographical Dictionary of American Educators*, 1, ed. John F. Okles (Westport, Connecticut, 1978), 54.

at Indian Village and Calhoun schools in Ouachita Parish. In addition to being an outstanding teacher, he gained a reputation as an eloquent public speaker promoting the cause of public education in Louisiana. Again his ability was rewarded by his appointment as State Institute Conductor in 1897. For three years he supervised teachers' institutes throughout Louisiana, gaining first-hand knowledge of the conditions and needs of Louisiana's schools and teachers. In 1900 he left Natchitoches and the position of State Institute Conductor to become president of the Louisiana Industrial Institute. During this four-year administration, President Aswell struggled to improve scholarship standards and put the infant Ruston school on a firm academic foundation. Very well known and admired in educational groups by this time, he was nominated for State Superintendent of Public Education on Newton Blanchard's ticket in 1904. As state superintendent, James B. Aswell worked diligently and with marked success to improve public education in Louisiana. Among his achievements were the solidification of public opinion for tax supported schools, erection of hundreds of school buildings, early consolidation of small country schools, beginning a high school system, and increased school revenues especially from local sources.⁸⁸ He had just been re-elected state superintendent when Governor Jared Y. Sanders asked him to become president of the State Normal School to replace B.C. Caldwell who had been dismissed. T.H. Harris then became State Superintendent of Public Education. Later, Harris recalled the meeting between himself, Governor Sanders, and Superintendent Aswell:

Superintendent Aswell and I met Governor Sanders in the real estate office of Mr. Danzier one morning in August, 1908. I knew the Governor by sight, and I had probably been pointed out to him. I don't recall that I had ever met him. He came into the real estate office a few minutes later, and the following is substantially the conversation between us: "Hello Tom. Well, Jim has decided that he is tired of parading around the State. He wants to go to the Normal School, and he thinks maybe you'll make a fairly good Superintendent of Education. So I shall appoint you." I replied, "I think you had better not do that. I know little of politics but I understand that politicians reward their political friends. I've never voted for you. When you ran for lieutenant governor, I voted for your opponent; and when you ran [for] governor, I voted against you. I think you should select a teacher who voted for you and appoint him." His answer was, "I am not concerned about past votes; I am looking for future votes." I accepted the appointment, and I never failed to vote for him when he later ran for office.⁸⁹

⁸⁸Cheves, "Educational and Political Career of Aswell," 6-7, 31; Cline, *Pioneer Leaders and Early Institutions*, 10-15; Stringer, "Aswell: Educator and Politician," 3-23.

⁸⁹T.H. Harris, *The Memoirs of T.H. Harris, State Superintendent of Public Education in Louisiana, 1908-1940* (Baton Rouge, 1963), 112-13.

Succeeding the popular B.C. Caldwell as president of the State Normal School, James B. Aswell encountered considerable resentment from the townspeople and faculty who mourned the loss of their beloved leader. A thirty-nine year-old educator with boundless energy and determination to improve the Normal, President Aswell within months won the confidence of the Natchitoches community. However, with the Normal School faculty he adopted a stern attitude. Realizing that the Normal could not reach its goal of providing the State with the best-trained teachers unless the faculty cooperated with him in his endeavors, President Aswell determined to rid the school's faculty of misfits, incompetents, and malcontents. Within a year rumors circulated in Natchitoches of a "rather violent shake-up" in the Normal schoolteaching corps. All but seven of the twenty-eight teachers who were serving the institution when President Aswell assumed office in 1908 were replaced by 1911. During the same years the faculty increased to fifty teachers.⁹⁰

⁹⁰Stringer, "Aswell: Educator and Politician," 26, 28-29; Cheves, "Educational and Political Career of Aswell," 33-34; *The Natchitoches Times*, May 7, 1909.



T.H. Harris — Courtesy of Louisiana Department of Education

Although local opposition caused President Aswell some uneasiness, he was much more concerned with the school's temporary, and thus deteriorating, physical plant. During his first year, President Aswell accomplished little more than a patchwork of temporary repairs, renovations, and improvements at the Normal. Buildings were painted, dormitories equipped with new furniture, and fences repaired and whitewashed. The sewer system was completed, an additional electrical generator utilized, indoor plumbing installed, and steam heat extended to the dormitories. The beauty of the grounds was enhanced by twelve thousand feet of concrete walks and demolition of an unsightly storage shed. The Dining Room Building was extended to accommodate two hundred additional persons and the auditorium furnished with new seating. Finally, a contract was arranged with the city of Natchitoches for pure water after a new well drilled on campus yielded salt water.⁹¹

Despite these improvements, President Aswell felt that the State Normal School had never been properly funded by the state. In 1910 he called it "the most inadequately equipped institution in Louisiana" and "the most poorly equipped State Normal School in the United States." The institution had only two brick buildings, one of which was under construction, and "six temporary frame fire-traps, with no model school, science building, hospital, library or gymnasium." Owing to inadequate appropriations, the state was paying only \$3.60 per month for each student at the school whereas in 1890 the state contributed more than seven dollars a month per student. Comparing Louisiana's support of its normal school unfavorably with that of other states, President Aswell in 1910 requested the astounding sum of nearly \$332,000 for operations, maintenance, improvements, and buildings at the State Normal for the ensuing two years.⁹² Included in his plans for the school were a new central dining room and kitchen, a model school building, fire-proof dormitories for three hundred students, a laundry building and central power plant, improvement of grounds and buildings, purchase of 175 acres to enlarge the Normal's grounds, and equipment for science, manual training, and agricultural instruction as well as operational funds.⁹³

Certainly President Aswell did not accomplish everything he envisioned for the Normal in his short three-year term, but he was amazingly successful in some areas. A new reinforced concrete Dining Hall Building seating one thousand students and containing fifteen bedrooms for young ladies on the second floor was begun, although not completed, under President Aswell. A reinforced concrete two-story dormitory, "B" Dormitory, housing ninety-six students in forty-eight bedrooms was erected in 1910 for thirty thousand dollars. It was planned to be the

⁹¹ Minutes of Board of Administrators, 93-95, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁹² *Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Normal School, 1910* (n.p., [1910]), 5, 8-9. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Thirteenth Biennial Report, 1910*.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 9; *The Shreveport Times*, June 8, 1910.

first of eight similar buildings around a dormitory quadrangle separated from the main academic building court on the hill. The new Dining Hall Building which cost thirty-four thousand dollars was at the western extremity of this dormitory court. A reinforced concrete steam laundry with modern equipment was also erected in 1910 as well as a new cow barn. The grounds of the the Normal were expanded to accommodate the new growth. For his building program, President Aswell was commended for "his untiring efforts to make possible the greatest institution of its kind in the country" and being "the moving spirit in thinking of tomorrow and letting to-day take care of itself."⁹⁴

In 1911 President Aswell began upgrading the academic standards at the Normal by placing the school on a quarter system. The four-year course was divided into eleven terms of three months. The first year comprised only two terms and reduced the number of lower level subjects. The remaining three years, which included advanced or specialized courses, consisted of three terms each. The revised curriculum was more compact, advanced, and provided greater opportunity for specialization through electives. The advancement in scholarship was justified by the better preparation of students in the public schools especially high schools. The new system allowed in-service teachers to work in the public schools nine months and still earn a quarter's credit at the Normal. Beginning in 1911 a teacher could earn a full quarter's credit in summer school and 15 percent credit on the teacher's examination or a year's extension of her teacher's certificate. It also allowed students who had to drop out of school for unexpected reasons a better chance of completing courses in the shortened term.⁹⁵

Under the new arrangement, a minimum of fifty-four credits was required in the following subjects: English, ten; mathematics, six; science, ten; drawing and manual training, five; singing, four; Latin or French, five; history and civics, five; professional subjects, nine. Three credits in physical training also were compulsory but not included in the fifty-four hour graduation requirement. Additionally, three terms of literary society work were required for graduation with two terms equivalent to one credit in English. High school graduates and holders of first grade teacher's certificates were admitted to the sixth term while those possessing

⁹⁴ Minutes of Board of Administrators, 129-30, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; Pettis, "Development of State Normal College," 16-17; Otis R. Crew, "History of Northwestern State College of Louisiana (typewritten), 26. Cited hereafter as Crew, "Northwestern State College"; "Buildings of The Louisiana State Normal College," Vertical File, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁹⁵ Minutes of Board of Administrators, 123-24, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *Louisiana State Normal School, Summer Term of Ten Weeks, May 30-August 5, 1911* (n.p. [1911]). Cited hereafter as *Normal School Summer Term, 1911; Session, 1911-12, Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La., May 29, 1911-May 24, 1912* (New Orleans, [1911]), 13-14. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Session, 1911-12*.

second grade certificates were accepted into the third term. Thus it was still possible for qualified students to finish the Normal course in a year and a half if they attended year-round.⁹⁶

A little over a year after James B. Aswell assumed direction of the State Normal School, rumors began circulating in Baton Rouge that he would be a candidate in the gubernatorial election of 1912. President Aswell neither confirmed nor denied the speculation.⁹⁷ Whatever his political plans were, a scandal erupted in 1910 which threatened to bar his re-entrance into Louisiana politics. The controversy concerned Aswell's alleged misuse of public funds as Superintendent of Education. According to the press accounts, the ex-superintendent was being investigated for missing vouchers and poor bookkeeping. For months the Normal School president consistently refused to comment on the rumors until he received the official report of Supervisor of Public Accounts Archibald M. Smith's investigation.⁹⁸

Finally after a two-month delay, in October 1910, the investigative report was made public and President Aswell responded to the specific charges in it. To the criticism that he kept poor books as head of the Department of Education, he replied, "The best bookkeeping is to get results with the fewest books. The correctness of my reports to the state auditor of receipts and disbursements of public funds was not affected by the lack of an elaborate system of bookkeeping." To the charge he had not kept his public and private accounts separate in Baton Rouge banks and that he had no vouchers for \$18,633.50 expended principally in traveling expenses and stamps, President Aswell exclaimed: "As to my traveling expenses, I am again free to state that I did not procure a receipt for every railroad ticket I purchased, nor did I get a voucher from the waiters at every restaurant at which I took a meal, or from the hotels at which I stopped — and I believe that no one else does." He concluded his defense by stating "I held an office of honor and of trust, and I considered that my certified statement would be a sufficient voucher."⁹⁹

James B. Aswell's immediate and forthright reply to the charges of fiscal irregularity, coupled with his excellent performance as Superintendent of Education, silenced most of his critics and he escaped without any serious damage to his reputation. Once again he could think of entering the gubernatorial race of 1912. Feeling that he would receive more publicity and visibility as Superintendent of Education than he would as president of the State Normal School, President Aswell presented an unusual proposal to T.H. Harris, his hand-picked successor in the Department of Education. According to Harris:

⁹⁶Normal School Summer Term, 1911; Normal School Session, 1911-12, 18.

⁹⁷The Natchitoches Times, September 17, 1909.

⁹⁸The Shreveport Times, August 12, 1910, August 18, 1910, September 29, 1910; The Natchitoches Times, August 19, 1910.

⁹⁹The Natchitoches Times, October 14, 1910; Stringer, "Aswell: Educator and Politician," 31-33.

... Mr. Aswell told me he wished to return to the office of State Superintendent of Education. He said he expected to make the race for governor and that the office of Superintendent of Education would be a better springboard for the launching of his campaign than the presidency of the Normal School. He asked me to go with him to Governor Sanders to request the Governor accept the resignation of both of us, then to appoint Mr. Aswell Superintendent and have me named President of the Normal School. He was sure Governor Sanders would fall in with his plan.¹⁰⁰

What the Governor's response would have been is not known, for Superintendent Harris recorded: "I told Mr. Aswell that there was nothing doing and that I would not be a party to any such politics."¹⁰¹

Whereupon President Aswell decided to resign the presidency of the State Normal School to enter the governor's race. On July 1, 1911, the Board of Administrators accepted his resignation and unanimously adopted a resolution stating:

... this Board expresses its highest appreciation of Dr. Aswell's very successful administration as president. Under his direction old buildings have been renovated and made comfortable, durable new buildings have been erected, the attendance of students has been increased and the standards of work have been elevated.¹⁰²

The same day the Normal faculty men presented President Aswell with an alligator traveling bag as a token of their appreciation of his excellent executive leadership as fourth president of the school.¹⁰³

The Caldwell-Aswell years were an exciting time for young people attending the State Normal School. Impressed by the appearance of the rapidly expanding and improving physical plant, a student entered the Normal crowded with a student body that had more than quadrupled in the fifteen-year period. From 1896 when B.C. Caldwell became president to President Aswell's resignation in 1911, the school's enrollment swelled from 362 to 1,863.¹⁰⁴ Naturally, student activities and organizations multiplied and administrative tasks increased in the growing institution. The atmosphere at the Natchitoches school became more college-oriented with students pursuing individual interests both in studies and extracurricular activities. Nevertheless, certain aspects of Normal life were still very regimented, especially dormitory life.

¹⁰⁰Harris, *Memoirs*, 116.

¹⁰¹Ibid.

¹⁰²Minutes of Board of Administrators, 133, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U. James B. Aswell ran for governor in the election of 1912 as an independent. He received 20 percent of the vote, carrying the hill parishes where the Populist tendency recently had been strong. Perry H. Howard, *Political Tendencies in Louisiana* (Baton Rouge, 1971), 203.

¹⁰³The Shreveport Times, July 1, 1911. In 1912 Aswell was elected as a Democrat to the United States Congress where he served from 1913 until his death in 1931. *Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1971* (Washington, 1971), 530.

¹⁰⁴Pettis, "Development of State Normal College," 31.



Campus Railroad Station

The success of the Normal School at the turn of the century was due largely to the presidents' personal interest in the students. President Caldwell himself answered inquiries of prospective students and their parents with personal letters and school catalogs. Once on campus a student usually met the president who advised her studies, counseled her personal problems, and attended to her other needs during her years at the school. President Caldwell frequently roamed the school grounds stopping to chat with students wherever he encountered them.¹⁰⁵ His concern for the well-being of the Normal students was uppermost when he opposed the moving of the railway depot from the school's grounds. When the Texas and Pacific Railway proposed building a new depot on Seventh Street in 1901, President Caldwell wrote Captain Leopold Caspari:

This location is a great convenience to the normal school; students coming to school or leaving for their homes find the station on the very grounds of the school, having a walk of but two to three hundred yards between the

¹⁰⁵ Knowles, "Caldwell," 67, 69; Wynonah Breazeale Johnson, "B.C. Caldwell," in "The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Act of the Legislature Establishing The Louisiana State Normal School, 1884-1934" (typewritten).

school buildings and the depot; in rainy weather the trains stop at the front gate putting off or receiving students on the walks . . . and the railroad has proved one of the greatest, if not the greatest factor in the prosperity and advancement of the school.¹⁰⁶

He also pointed out that freight and mail delivery were facilitated greatly by the nearby depot. Determinedly, President Caldwell sought the board's approval of resolutions allowing the Texas and Pacific Railway to buy or lease a portion of the Normal's grounds for a depot; however, the administrators lacked authority to approve any arrangement since the school's land title rested in the state.¹⁰⁷ Nevertheless, the board prepared legislation enabling it to lease a triangular strip of land not exceeding seven and two-tenths acres for railroad purposes. In June 1902 the General Assembly approved the bill and the Texas and Pacific Railway depot graced the Normal grounds under a twenty-five year lease for the sum of one dollar annually.¹⁰⁸ To further protect the students, every young lady, not escorted by her parents or other family members, was met at the depot by the president or his secretary who also handled the student's baggage.¹⁰⁹

Once entering the Normal School, most of the girls lived in the club, the boarding department. Both Presidents Caldwell and Aswell felt a keen responsibility for the well-being of the club members and directed the affairs of the boarding department personally. Beginning in 1897, probably because of rapidly increasing enrollment, the rules of the club were detailed in the school's catalog so that young ladies knew what was expected of them. Upon joining the Normal club a student promised to obey club rules knowing that, if she failed to do so, the president could ask her to leave. Many of the regulations dealt with relations with young men, off-campus activities, or campus living. In 1897 a young lady boarder was not permitted visits from gentlemen except during the holiday vacation nor was she allowed a male escort when attending town church services or social gatherings. She could occasionally visit friends or relatives living in town but only with her parents' written request at the beginning of a session. Under no conditions, even with her parents' consent, was a club member permitted to spend a night away from the Normal. She was, however, allowed to go to town on Wednesday and Friday afternoons between 3:00 p.m. and sunset to shop, visit friends, or for other necessary purposes.

¹⁰⁶ B.C. Caldwell to Capt. L. Caspari, March 27, 1901, Caldwell Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.; B.C. Caldwell to L.S. Thorne, July 27, 1901, *ibid.*; B.C. Caldwell to Capt. L. Caspari, July 27, 1901, *ibid.*; Minutes of Board of Administrators, 55-57, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁰⁸ Minutes of Board of Administrators, 57, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; "An Act To authorize the Board of Administrators of the State Normal School to lease for railroad purposes a certain piece of land belonging to and included within the grounds of said Normal School," *Acts Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana*, 1902, 97-98.

¹⁰⁹ *Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La. Catalogue, 1897-98. Announcements, 1898-99* (New Orleans, 1898), 45. Cited hereafter as *Normal School Catalogue, 1897-98*.

On Sundays a student could attend day church services alone, but at night she had to be accompanied by a faculty member.¹¹⁰ In 1898 parents and friends of the female boarders were requested "not to send packages of food of any kind at any time of the year" since they caused sickness and "irregular habits" among the students. More importantly, students were absolutely prohibited from having chloroform, morphine, laudanum, and other dangerous or poisonous substances in their possession. For violating this rule a young lady was subject to immediate dismissal from the school. All necessary medicines were provided by the school authorities.¹¹¹

By 1900 some of the strict regulations were liberalized ever so slightly. Now a young lady could entertain gentlemen visitors if they were of her immediate family and might even have an escort to church and social functions, provided either the president or club matron accompanied them.¹¹² A year later club members were instructed that they could not go off campus without reporting to the matron both on leaving and returning. Now at least they were allowed to receive packages of fresh fruit but "meats, cakes, pastry, canned foods, preserves, nuts and confectionery are absolutely forbidden." At the same time alcohol was added to the list of banned "narcotic and intoxicating" substances.¹¹³ To help pass long weekends, in 1906 club members were given permission to visit or shop in town on Saturday mornings between nine and eleven o'clock. Finally in 1909 no hours or days were specified for town visits but students still had to report upon leaving and returning to the school. Perhaps for this reason, the school catalog of that year contained the following underlined warning: "*Those who have no serious purpose, and lazy, sickly, and untrustworthy students are dismissed without ceremony.*"¹¹⁴ Such a threat was enough to keep most students in line.

Nevertheless, as in all groups, infractions of the rules occurred. The Normal club provided a mechanism for handling such cases. In addition to the president who personally directed the club and the matrons in charge of dormitory buildings, there was an advisory council of seven club members, six students, and one teacher, elected semi-annually by the residents of each dormitory. The committee made semi-weekly reports to the president and recommended changes in food, regulations, membership, service, and other club affairs.¹¹⁵ Disciplining serious violators of the club's rules, however, was the exclusive responsibility of the president. According to B.C. Caldwell, "Every feature of the Club management and of the daily life of its members is based on the assumption that the students are capable

of self-control and desire to preserve the interests and welfare of the Club. This makes discipline an easy matter." For minor offenses a student suffered suspension of privileges for a certain period of time while for grave violations of club rules or for continuous neglect of duty, she was dismissed.¹¹⁶ President Caldwell dealt compassionately but firmly with students who consistently or seriously violated club rules. For instance, in 1901 he sent two students home early not allowing them to participate in the year-end social events of the session. One of the girls had consistently broken club rules by "writing to a number of [University] cadets who had never met her" and receiving letters from them with "familiar messages written on the envelopes in various handwriting." For this impropriety, President Caldwell called the girl in, counseled her, and accepted her pledge to desist from such correspondence. Some weeks later, the president learned that the same young lady had been playing slot machines in one of the stores in town. Again calling her in for a talk, he put her "under arrest," thus preventing her from going to town unless accompanied by a teacher. A week before the session ended the young lady again violated club rules by planning to meet, along with another Normalite, some young men the following Sunday night without the president's consent or knowledge. At this juncture, President Caldwell sent both girls home denying them participation in commencement week activities but not expelling them or causing them to lose a term's credit.¹¹⁷ Again in 1903 President Caldwell sent a young lady home for "a determined purpose on her part to violate the regulations concerning her association with young men."¹¹⁸ Other students returned or were sent home due to poor grades. However, considering the hundreds of girls in the club, violations were few and generally not of a serious nature.

Young women and men boarding in town as well as club members were to conduct themselves "with the upmost propriety at all times." Any student "not disposed to submit willingly and cheerfully to all the restraints . . . of the school" was asked to leave. A student absent for five days without permission or valid excuse was dropped from the rolls of that term. "Habitual irregularity of attendance, or neglect of study" could result in a request that the offending student withdraw from the school, while use of intoxicating liquors was cause for refusing admittance to the Normal and for dismissal.¹¹⁹ Considering the Victorian morality of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the State Normal School's regulations were probably no stricter than those governing students in their homes and were certainly approved by parents leaving their daughters in the school's care.

The daily routine of Normal students was extremely regimented. Although no rising was prescribed, the club's breakfast was served at eight o'clock with classes

¹¹⁰Normal School Catalogue, 1896-97, 75.

¹¹¹Normal School Catalogue, 1897-98, 44.

¹¹²Normal School Sixteenth Annual Circular, 1900, 27.

¹¹³Normal School Seventeenth Annual Circular, 1901, 36.

¹¹⁴Normal School Catalog, September, 1906, 22; Session, 1909-1910. Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La. September 28th, 1909-May 6, 1910 (n.p. [1909]), 21-23.

¹¹⁵Normal School Seventeenth Annual Circular, 1901, 35.

¹¹⁶Normal School Catalogue, 1897-98, 44.

¹¹⁷Caldwell Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹¹⁸Ibid.

¹¹⁹Normal School Catalogue, 1896-97, 77.

beginning at 8:55 during the fall and winter months. With the arrival of warmer weather classes were begun earlier, starting at 8:30 in April and 8:00 in May. Lunch was served at 12:30 and the school day ended at 2:30. From the end of classes to dinner at 5:00 and for two hours after the evening meal the students enjoyed physical exercise, especially outdoor activities. From 7:00 to 10:00 in the evening they attended study hall enjoying a short break at 8:30. After study hall students returned to their rooms and at 10:30 all lights were out.¹²⁰ During the summer term, beginning in 1903, the meal and class schedule was modified with coffee and rolls at 6:30, breakfast at 8:30, dinner at 1:00 and supper at 6:00. Classes began at seven o'clock and ended before noon leaving the afternoons and evenings free for recreation and special study. However, classes were held six days a week in the summer months.¹²¹

Due to a number of factors, including good food and proper rest and recreation, the health of the Normal students was remarkable during the Caldwell-Aswell years. Nonetheless, sporadic outbreaks of typhoid fever among the students in 1896, 1897, and 1902, resulted in the death of two students. President Caldwell first explained that the 1897 cases, which constituted the largest outbreak, were traced to the school's water supply but later he named the club's milk supply as the source of infection. Whatever the source of the fever, he instituted elaborate sterilization methods which prevented its spread that year. The same procedures were used after the isolated case of 1902 with equal success.¹²² President Caldwell, himself, suffered a terrible personal loss when in September, 1903, his thirty-two year old wife died of typhoid fever at the Normal.¹²³ Yellow fever, always a threat in Louisiana, forced the postponement of the Normal's opening in 1898 because of a quarantine in the New Orleans area. The only other effect of the outbreak on the school's operations was a cancellation of all holidays that year and an extension of the session into June to make up for the lost class days.¹²⁴ A case of smallpox which occurred in 1906 in one of the dormitories panicked about forty girls into leaving for home immediately, but when no other cases developed, they returned to the school.¹²⁵ To combat all sickness on campus, President Caldwell insisted on a well-

¹²⁰Normal School Catalogue, *ibid.*, 70, 76.

¹²¹Nineteenth Annual Circular of Information of the State Normal School of Louisiana, Natchitoches, August, 1903, Catalogue of Alumni, 1885-1903. Announcements, 1903-1904 (New Orleans, 1903), 30. Cited hereafter as Normal School Nineteenth Annual Circular, 1903; Normal School Summer Term, 1903, n.p.

¹²²B.C. Caldwell to Dr. N. Himel, August 15, 1904, Caldwell Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; Minutes of Board of Administrators, 90, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; The Natchitoches Enterprise, November 26, 1908.

¹²³Knowles, "Caldwell," 88.

¹²⁴B.C. Caldwell to Miss Minnie L. Stallcup, September 28, 1898, Caldwell Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; Normal School Seventh Biennial Report, 1898, 5.

¹²⁵For a description of the various diseases that affected the Normal student body see Knowles "Caldwell," 49-68.

equipped infirmary and a physician on call to attend the students' health needs.¹²⁶ After 1906 the incidence of serious illness declined at the Normal, probably because of improvements in the water supply, sanitation, and heating systems. The health record of the Normal was, indeed, unusually good in the early twentieth century.

During the administrations of Presidents Caldwell and Aswell, tuition remained free for those planning to teach in Louisiana's public school while expenses actually declined slightly from President Boyd's last year. In 1901 room and board was ten dollars a month with washing costing another \$1.50. The incidental fee of two dollars a term was still assessed and books for the same period cost from five to eight dollars. Thus, for a full session of eight months, a student paid from \$106 to \$120.¹²⁷ Two years later room and board increased to twelve dollars a month where it remained until the end of President Aswell's tenure in 1911.¹²⁸ As reasonable as the expenses were at the Normal School, many students found paying them difficult and others, impossible. Most Normal students came from poor, rural families which lacked the resources to pay for their children's education while others were teachers trying to save enough money from meager salaries to attend school part-time.

Fortunately, deserving students found various sources of financial aid provided at the Normal. In 1897 the Alumni Association established a scholarship paying all expenses for one student annually. Two years later the coveted scholarship was named for Alby L. Smith, the school's early training teacher.¹²⁹ In 1902 the General Assembly approved legislation authorizing each parish and each ward of the city of New Orleans to select one female student to receive a beneficiary scholarship to one of the state-supported institutions. A beneficiary scholarship presented to a deserving student whose parents could not afford to send her to school and granted by a competitive examination was awarded for a student's entire course of study. At the Normal a beneficiary scholarship represented about \$125 annually.¹³⁰ Other students were aided when the Alumni Association established a loan fund in 1901. The loans, at 4 percent interest, were made to students in the last year

¹²⁶Knowles, "Caldwell," 66.

¹²⁷B.C. Caldwell to R.G. Ragellio, June 29, 1901, Caldwell Papers, University Archives, E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; B.C. Caldwell to Miss Mary Wilkinson, February 25, 1901, *ibid.*

¹²⁸Normal School Nineteenth Annual Circular, 1903, 29; The Normal Quarterly of the Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, Louisiana. Announcements for Twenty-seventh year, 1912-1913, I (July 1, 1912), 20.

¹²⁹Potpourri, 1909, 17; Normal School Catalogue, 1896-97, 25.

¹³⁰"An Act To establish the beneficiary system for female students at the Louisiana Industrial or South West Louisiana Industrial Institutes, or State Normal School," Acts Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana, 1902, 292-93; Normal School Nineteenth Annual Circular, 1903, 26. Prior to the legislation of 1902, several parishes were already maintaining beneficiary scholarships at the Normal. They were LaFourche, Ascension, Assumption, St. Charles, East Baton Rouge, West Baton Rouge, West Carroll, and Iberville. Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Education, 1900-1901, 235-36.

of the Normal course and were to be repaid from a graduate's first year's earnings. By 1909 the Alumni Association had made loans to twenty-seven students, twenty of whom had graduated and two were parish superintendents. All loans were repaid almost immediately by the grateful recipients. There were also several other small loan funds established by graduates or friends of the school and administered by the president.¹³¹ Additionally, President Caldwell himself often lent money to deserving students who were without other means of attending the Normal.¹³²

All Normal students enjoyed a proliferation of activities at the turn of the century. The two early literary societies, Seekers After Knowledge and the Eclectic Literary Society, continued to engage in debate, declamation, oration, musical programs, and competition. As enrollment increased, they were joined by a third literary society, the Modern Culture Club, which was established in 1902. Still unable to accommodate all students adequately, the three established societies formed a fourth, the Mortar Board, in 1910. All students below the fifth term (junior standing) were required to withdraw from the older societies and together with other lower level students they formed the Mortar Board.¹³³

Besides the general literary societies, Normal students also established organizations of special interest or service to the school. By 1904 a number of students interested in photography formed a Camera Club which provided pictures for the annual catalog.¹³⁴ Four years later the students elected an editorial staff to begin work on the school's first annual. In 1909 they published the first issue of the *Potpourri* which in a light and entertaining manner covered the school's mission, faculty, students, activities, and organizations through verse, prose, and pictures.¹³⁵ The early issues of the *Potpourri* were filled with delightful, often humorous, reminiscences of individual faculty members, students, and happenings. For example, the 1911 *Potpourri's* account of the establishment of a school fire company read:

Have patience, my reader, you shall see
How the Fire Company came to be.
It was in the autumn of nineteen-nine,
When the President thought it would be fine
To organize a body, strong and calm,
In case of fire to give the alarm.

¹³¹*Potpourri*, 1909, 18; *Twenty-first Annual Circular of Information of the State Normal School of Louisiana, Natchitoches, August, 1905. Catalogue of Alumni, 1885-1905. Students, 1904-1905. Announcements, 1905-1906* (New Orleans, 1905), 17.

¹³²B.C. Caldwell to Rev. William B. Van Valkenburg, January 28, 1899, Caldwell Papers, University Archives, E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; Knowles, "Caldwell," 73-74.

¹³³*Potpourri*, 1910, 62, 66-67; *ibid.*, 1911, 119.

¹³⁴*Twentieth Annual Circular of Information of the State Normal School of Louisiana, Natchitoches, September, 1904. Catalogue of Alumni, 1885-1904. Students, 1903-1904. Announcements, 1904-1905* (New Orleans, 1904), 25.

¹³⁵*The Shreveport Times*, December 5, 1908; *Potpourri*, 1909.



Fire Company

So, as soon as he thought, he lost no time
In carrying out this dream sublime.
He called the girls from every hall,
And gave great duties to them all.
So, in case of a fire, we all can see
The Normal is safe with her Fire Company!¹³⁶

The religious training of the early Normal students was encouraged by a number of campus organizations. The Devotional Circle was a nonsectarian group, organized in 1898 by the Normal girls to emphasize the spiritual side of their lives. It met every Sunday evening for programs of prayers, scripture readings, songs, and readings. In 1911 the Devotional Circle merged into the Young Women's Christian Association which stressed the social and religious development of the young ladies. The Y.W.C.A. became one of the most active organizations at the

¹³⁶*Potpourri*, 1911, 153.

Normal. In addition to its weekly mission study classes and devotional meetings, the Y.W.C.A. hosted social gatherings for faculty and students on the campus.¹³⁷ Its counterpart, the Young Men's Christian Association, was established in 1909 to bring the young man "into a closer, personal relationship with his Creator, God, and Savior, Christ . . . by a three-fold development of spirit, mind, and body."¹³⁸ For the numerous Catholic students there was a branch of the Apostleship of Prayer, a League of the Sacred Heart. Its regular meetings consisting of hymns, prayers, and religious discussions were held on Sunday evenings with the Bishop of Natchitoches often in attendance.¹³⁹ The Onward and Upward Circle of King's Daughters, one of the oldest campus organizations, engaged in works of charity. They helped needy Normalites stay in school, helped poor widows with small children, especially at Thanksgiving and Christmas, and provided destitute children with school clothing and books. The daughters raised money by selling cake, fudge, and lemonade to club members each week. Although never one of the largest campus organizations, it was one of the most dedicated.¹⁴⁰

In order to enhance various school activities, a Normal School band was established in 1911. Sixteen boys, organized by H.W. Stopher, met for practice with borrowed musical instruments. Others soon joined the band and through benefit concerts and entertainments the boys raised money to buy band instruments. By 1912 the Normal band numbered thirty-six members who had raised still more money to purchase cadet grey uniforms with black and white trimmings. The Normal band played at school functions and at football games.¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ *Potpourri*, 1909, 86; *ibid.*, 1912, 196.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 1910, 79.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 1909, 88.

¹⁴⁰ *Potpourri*, 1909, 90; *ibid.*, 1910, 72; *ibid.*, 1911, 124.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 1912, 218; *Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education To The Governor and To The General Assembly, School Sessions of 1909-1910 and 1910-11* (Baton Rouge, 1912), 162.



Normal Band

In sports, the Normal School had varsity women's and men's baseball teams, a women's basketball team and a men's football team. The football team was, however, hindered by the small number of boys enrolled at the school, the high scholastic standards, a lack of equipment, and the absence of an adequate gridiron field. The playing field deficiency was rectified in 1911 when fifty-six Normal boys, aided by Dr. Pool and other faculty members, created an athletic park out of the "forest primeval" by felling trees and removing stumps. Known as the "Stump Diggers," they leveled a field, covered it with cinders and then dirt, enclosed it with a six-foot fence, and circled it with a cinder track. Next they helped build a thousand-seat grandstand and a bathhouse to complete the handsome "Athletic Park." That year the Normal football team expanded its schedule to include Tulane and LSU as well as "every team of note in the state." Although they were the lightest team in the Normal's history, averaging 139 pounds, they made a "respectable showing." Track was introduced in 1912 with instant success. The Normal hosted an intercollegiate meet April 1 in which it won its first state championship in track athletics.¹⁴²

The culmination of the early Normal's splendid success came with the celebration of its twenty-fifth anniversary in 1910. On Sunday, June 5, and Monday, June 6, Natchitoches was inundated with some five thousand visiting alumni and friends of the school. The governor, other state officials, and every member of the legislature received individual invitations to the anniversary ceremonies. Accommodations were provided for the visitors in the homes of the townspeople who also collected funds to pay for the celebration. The governor and legislators arrived on a special train which brought them from New Orleans and Baton Rouge Monday morning and remained on the Normal siding for the convenience of the special guests. Governor J.Y. Sanders and more than seventy members of the legislature took part in the two-day activities as guests of the Natchitoches citizens. Other special trains brought people from Alexandria and Shreveport.¹⁴³ The city and school were gaily decorated for the event:

Our city fathers did excellent work in illuminating the city during the celebration. The streets were ablaze with electrical decorations in the Normal colors purple and white, the arches over the bridge and Normal gate being particularly effective.

The Normal grounds, many buildings and residences were decorated in the Normal colors and many flags floated over our city.¹⁴⁴

The anniversary ceremonies took place in a large pavilion erected under shade trees in front of the main Normal building (Caldwell Hall). Stretched beneath the

¹⁴² *Potpourri*, 1912, 226, 234.

¹⁴³ *The Natchitoches Times*, February 11, 1910, June 10, 1910, June 24, 1910; *The Shreveport Times*, June 2, 1910, June 5, 1910.

¹⁴⁴ *The Natchitoches Times*, June 10, 1910.

trees were the colors of the Normal, pennants of the literary societies and campus organizations, and the banners of other schools and colleges. The program commenced Sunday morning with the Right Reverend Thomas F. Gailor, Episcopal bishop of Tennessee, giving the jubilee sermon and the Normal orchestra and chorus providing musical renditions. Sunday afternoon was highlighted by a sacred concert followed at 8:00 p.m. by a series of addresses. Professor P.P. Claxton of the University of Tennessee spoke on "The Normal School and the State," Professor R.L. Himes of Louisiana State University on "The Normal School and the Educational Awakening," and Bishop Gailor on "The Normal School as a Factor in Community Leadership."¹⁴⁵

The next day, Monday, the main ceremonies took place. The governor and legislators, who had arrived earlier that morning, were taken on a tour of the school's buildings by President Aswell. "There was general surprise over the lack of accommodations. . . . In one room no fewer than thirteen girls were found crowded. The old auditorium, including the stage, has been curtained off into sleeping quarters and even the corners of the hallways are made to do duty as bedrooms." Mr. Aswell grasped the opportunity to declare "we are in urgent need for dormitories unless we are to stop still."¹⁴⁶ After the inspection, the governor and legislative party were treated to breakfast in the dining hall. Next an academic procession of the chief executive, legislators, faculty, and alumni was formed and marched to the outdoor pavilion. After opening remarks by President Aswell and the presentation of a portrait of the Normal School's first president, Edward E. Sheib, ex-Governor Joseph W. Folk of Missouri delivered the main address on "Negative Honesty is the Next Thing to Positive Dishonesty." Governor Sanders then addressed the crowd congratulating President Aswell for his splendid work at the Normal and declaring, "We love the Normal and I want to assure you the members of this Legislature will appropriate every dollar the State treasury will stand to its support and I will gladly sign any bill they pass in the interest of this institution."¹⁴⁷ The governor then presented diplomas to 143 graduates, the largest annual graduating class of any state institution up until that time.¹⁴⁸

At five o'clock Monday evening the ceremonies resumed with an outdoor concert and reception. After congratulatory remarks by representatives of other schools, Senator Thomas Barret, a long-time member of the Board of Administrators, presented the Normal with a sixty-foot flag which was raised on the school's main building. Governor Sanders received the flag for the Normal and was loudly applauded when he instructed President Aswell to give the students a holiday the

¹⁴⁵*The Shreveport Times*, June 6, 1910; *The Natchitoches Times*, June 10, 1910; *Potpourri*, 1911, 11.

¹⁴⁶*The Shreveport Times*, June 7, 1910.

¹⁴⁷*Ibid.*; *The Natchitoches Times*, June 10, 1910.

¹⁴⁸*The Natchitoches Times*, May 6, 1910, June 10, 1910. The graduating class represented forty-one parishes.

next day "as a compensation for their having to listen to one speech by Senator Barret and two by himself today." The memorable day ended with an alumni banquet that night which concluded at midnight whereupon the special guests boarded their sleepers for the return trip home.¹⁴⁹

The 1910 celebration was a fitting tribute to the State Normal School which had had 13,180 students enrolled and 1,151 graduates in its twenty-five year existence. By then a majority of the parish superintendents and many of the teachers in the Louisiana schools had graduated from Normal. Interestingly, the presidents of the three other state institutions of higher learning — Thomas D. Boyd of Louisiana State University, E.L. Stephens of the South-West Louisiana Industrial Institute at Lafayette, and J.E. Keeny of the Louisiana Industrial Institute at Ruston — had been affiliated with the State Normal School at one time.¹⁵⁰ During his administration President Caldwell had recognized the Normal's leading role in Louisiana's education system. Upon learning that the governor could not attend a Normal board meeting because of "matters of importance in his office," President Caldwell sarcastically requested James B. Aswell to "go down and explain to him [the governor] that the normal school is a matter of importance to the schools of the state."¹⁵¹ Its first twenty-five years of achievement proved the State Normal School was indeed "a matter of importance" in Louisiana education.

¹⁴⁹*The Shreveport Times*, June 7, 1910; *The Natchitoches Times*, June 10, 1910.

¹⁵⁰*The Shreveport Times*, June 8, 1910.

¹⁵¹B.C. Caldwell to Mr. Aswell, [August 8, 1904], Caldwell Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

"UPWARD AND ONWARD"

When James B. Aswell left the State Normal School in 1911, public education in Louisiana was finally beginning to demonstrate substantial progress. Aswell's initiatives coupled with T.H. Harris's succeeding accomplishments as Superintendents of Public Education led to better financing of education, increased school consolidation, rising pupil enrollment, higher teacher standards and salaries, accrediting of high schools, and other noteworthy developments. As Louisiana public education advanced in the twentieth century the State Normal School grew in stature until in 1918 it was authorized to grant bachelor's degrees and in 1921, in recognition of its new status, it was renamed the Louisiana State Normal College. Meanwhile, its enrollment continued increasing, its curricula were diversified, and its position as one of the South's outstanding teacher training institutions gained regional and national recognition. Despite these notable achievements, the State Normal School's role in Louisiana's educational system was dramatically modified. It was no longer unchallenged as the teacher training institution in the state. Following national educational trends, other Louisiana institutions of higher learning inaugurated teacher training programs in competition with the Normal School. Additionally, national events and trends, such as World War I and the new social mores of the 1920s, fomented substantial changes at the school especially among the students. Victor L. Roy, who served as the institution's fifth president from 1911 to 1929, met, but more often fought, twentieth-century America's altered life style and values while leading the school to improved academic standards and continued growth.

Victor Leander Roy was born June 18, 1871, in Mansura, Louisiana, to Leandre François and Adelina (Cailleteau) Roy.¹ After attending local Avoyelles parish schools for nine years, he entered Louisiana State University in 1886 where he graduated four years later with a B.S. degree, first lieutenant's commission, and faculty medal for maintaining the highest grade average during his junior and senior years. Entering teaching immediately, young Roy delayed his further educational endeavors until 1894 when he entered summer school at the University of Chicago. Returning to Louisiana he attended Tulane University from 1894 to 1896 but because of interrupted study did not receive the A.M. degree until 1925.²

¹Rodney Cline, *Pioneer Leaders and Early Institutions in Louisiana Education* (Baton Rouge, 1969), 179; cited hereafter as Cline, *Pioneer Leaders and Early Institutions*; Otis R. Crew, "History of Northwestern State College of Louisiana" (typewritten), 32; cited hereafter as Crew, "Northwestern State College."

²Cline, *Pioneer Leaders and Early Institutions*, 179; E.L. Stephens, "Louisiana Schoolmen," *The Louisiana School Review*, XV (October 1907), 29; "Victor Leander Roy," *Who's Who in the South*, 1927, 631.

After graduating from Louisiana State University in 1890, Victor L. Roy taught school for a year before accepting a faculty position at Southern University in New Orleans where he remained for six years. In 1897 he returned to his native Avoyelles Parish to serve as principal of Marksville High School.³ After the Southwestern Louisiana Industrial Institute opened at Lafayette, in 1901 President E.L. Stephens offered Roy a position as teacher of science and mathematics which he immediately accepted. In June 1904 he resigned from the Institute faculty to become Superintendent of Schools in Avoyelles Parish at an annual salary of two thousand dollars.⁴ Among his achievements as superintendent was the introduction of wagonettes for the transportation of students and the establishment of the first Boys Corn Club in the South at Moreauville in 1908. He also gained public support for increased school taxation which resulted in the erection of new schools and the repair of older structures. Because of his success as superintendent in Avoyelles Parish Mr. Roy was offered the superintendency of schools in Lafayette Parish in 1907. In a very unusual arrangement, for six months he served both parishes as superintendent.⁵ In 1909 he left his position in Avoyelles Parish to become Director of Agricultural Extension at Louisiana State University. Among his duties there were promotion of the teaching of agriculture in the public schools and the organization of boys clubs, including Corn Clubs, which were the forerunners of 4-H Clubs. In 1909 he was elected president of the Louisiana Teachers Association.⁶ After three years at Louisiana State University, V.L. Roy was offered the presidency of the State Normal School. Forty years of age and having varied experience in both the public schools and institutions of higher learning in Louisiana, Mr. Roy was well qualified to be president of the state's only teacher-training institution.

Despite V.L. Roy's educational background his appointment to the Normal School presidency became controversial. In fact, one of his past experiences, instructor at black Southern University in New Orleans, was the source of strong opposition to him. When the Board of Administrators met in Natchitoches on July 1, 1911, to elect a president to fulfill J.B. Aswell's unexpired term, Superintendent of Public Education T.H. Harris nominated Victor L. Roy with A.J. Lafarque seconding the nomination. With no other names being submitted and following sup-

³John Oliver Pettis, "Development of the Louisiana State Normal College, 1884-1927" (M.A. thesis, Louisiana State University, 1927), 8; cited hereafter as Pettis, "Development of State Normal College"; "Victor Leander Roy," *Who's Who in the South*, 1927, 631. Roy described his first teaching job, "I promptly landed a teaching job in Mansura. Paid the sum of \$50 a month; my duties included teaching all elementary and high school subjects then offered to some half-a-hundred pupils of varying ages." Quoted in Douglas C. Westbrook, "Victor Leander Roy: Louisiana Educator," *Louisiana Studies*, XI (Spring, 1972), 13; cited hereafter as Douglas, "Roy."

⁴Stephens, "Louisiana Schoolmen," 29; *Current Sauce*, March 7, 1929.

⁵Cline, *Pioneer Leaders and Early Institutions*, 179, 181; Stephens, "Louisiana Schoolmen," 29-30.

⁶Cline, *Pioneer Leaders and Early Institutions*, 181; Pettis, "Development of State Normal College," 8; *Current Sauce*, March 7, 1929.

porting comments by Harris, Lafarque, and Governor J.Y. Sanders, and opposing remarks by G.W. Jack, the board voted. Six members voted for Professor Roy while G.W. Jack cast the sole dissenting vote.⁷ Thus, without a unanimous vote, V.L. Roy became the fifth president of the Louisiana State Normal School. Public controversy followed his selection. G.W. Jack of Shreveport voted against Mr. Roy because he had served on the interracial faculty of Southern University in New Orleans from 1891 to 1897. In casting his vote, Jack admitted "that he knew little of Mr. Roy personally, that the reports of his work were favorable but that there was one incident in his life that would prevent his giving his vote to install him as president of the Normal . . . that Mr. Roy had spent six years of his life as a teacher in the Southern University, where he taught Negroes with white men and negro women as teachers . . . he cer [sic] did not think him a proper person to place at the head of an institution with hundreds of white girls attending."⁸ Whereupon Governor Sanders defended Mr. Roy's employment at the Negro university and deplored the racial issue that had risen.⁹ The next day Mr. Jack sent the governor his resignation from the Board of Administrators stating, "I protested against his [Roy's] election. To remain on the Board would be to acquiesce. This I cannot do."¹⁰ Within a week Governor Sanders replaced Attorney Jack with J.C. Foster, a Shreveport wholesale grocer and cotton factor.¹¹

G.W. Jack's negative vote and subsequent resignation opened a floodgate of white supremacy arguments against V.L. Roy's appointment. The public press, especially *The Shreveport Times*, became the vehicle for many protesters. In one of the newspaper's columns, "Letters From the People," writers lashed out at Professor Roy for fostering "social equality" with Negroes and for violating the tenets of white supremacy.¹² Mass meetings were held in towns such as Bernice, Montgomery, Lula, Campti, and Coushatta condemning Roy for his teaching at a Negro institution and calling for his resignation. Other villages including Clarence, Marthaville, Pelican, Robeline, and Grand Cane circulated petitions and resolutions protesting Roy's appointment.¹³

As virulent as the opposition was, there were other groups and individuals who defended Professor Roy's selection in the public press and who welcomed him to

⁷Minutes, Board of Administrators, State Normal School of Louisiana (typewritten), 133, University Archives, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana; cited hereafter as A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁸*The Natchitoches Times*, July 7, 1911.

⁹*The Daily Picayune*, July 2, 1911; *The Natchitoches Times*, July 7, 1911.

¹⁰*The Daily Picayune*, July 2, 1911; *The Shreveport Times*, July 3, 1911.

¹¹*The Shreveport Times*, July 8, 1911.

¹²*The Shreveport Times*, July 5, 1911, July 10, 1911, July 21, 1911.

¹³*Ibid.*, July 7, 1911, July 10, 1911, July 13, 1911, July 14, 1911, July 17, 1911, July 19, 1911.

the Normal. An editorial in *The Daily Picayune* exclaimed, "The selection is in every way an admirable one as Prof. Roy is a Louisianian and has achieved an enviable reputation as an educator in the schools of the state."¹⁴ His election was received with expressions of approval and promises of support by the citizens of Natchitoches. On July 11, Natchitoches Mayor Adolph L'Herisson accompanied by other leading local politicians and businessmen addressed over twelve hundred assembled students welcoming the new president and promising him the community's full cooperation.¹⁵ Less than a week later, Colonel J.W. Nicholson, president of Louisiana State University at the time of Roy's graduation, published an extensive explanation of the young teacher's acceptance of a position at Southern University. Knowing that young men had difficulty finding good positions in the 1890s, Colonel Nicholson himself had advised V.L. Roy to accept a position at the Negro institution. The ex-Confederate colonel explained, "The South was just recovering from the wreck of reconstruction. Those of us who had gone through that dark period knew that our troubles with the Negroes had largely grown out of the pernicious doctrines which had been instilled into their minds and hearts by Northern carpetbaggers." He continued ". . . so the board [of Supervisors], all Southern men, determined, if possible, to select teachers imbued with Southern ideals and sentiments . . . with the understanding that their relations with the Negroes would be purely and simply a business or professional relation. . . . There was no thought of social equality between the whites and blacks." Colonel Nicholson felt that Roy had performed "a patriotic act — a splendid service to the State, the institution [Southern] and the Negroes" and pointed out that until his appointment to the Normal, nothing had been said of his years at Southern.¹⁶ Additionally, V.L. Roy was praised by prominent people of his home parish of Avoyelles for his "past services in the cause of education, his great administrative ability as an educator and his high character."¹⁷ Finally, the student body of the Louisiana State University Summer Normal School endorsed Roy's appointment, citing his outstanding services to Louisiana education and his "loyalty to white men's civilization."¹⁸ By the end of July, the public controversy subsided and Victor L. Roy settled into the routine of the president's office.

However, opposition to President Roy was not dead. Since he had been elected simply to fulfill the unexpired term of J.B. Aswell, he had to stand for reelection to a four-year term in the summer of 1912. Again his election caused consternation

¹⁴*The Daily Picayune*, July 3, 1911.

¹⁵*The Shreveport Times*, July 11, 1911.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, July 16, 1911.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, July 17, 1911.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, July 22, 1911.

and conflict. Several members of the Board of Administrators, who favored the restoration of B.C. Caldwell to the school's post, resigned in protest against what they considered gubernatorial dictation. Governor Luther Hall himself originally favored the selection of ex-president Caldwell when he appointed the new board; however, by the time it met in 1912 the governor apparently had changed his mind. A Natchitoches newspaper reported that in a letter to one of the board members the governor expressed "the belief that the best interests of the school required the re-election of President Roy."¹⁹ The local community, which also favored Caldwell, was "stirred up" and delegations of citizens met with individual board members at the local hotel to ascertain the governor's role in the selection process. Whether Governor Hall attempted to dictate to the board is uncertain but John M. Parker of Monroe and Dr. J.W. Cockerham of Natchitoches felt that he did. Both men resigned their positions on the board in protest. According to *The Natchitoches Times*, the reason Governor Hall abandoned Caldwell in favor of President Roy was "political expediency." President Roy's South Louisiana friends convinced the governor that the failure to reelect Professor Roy would reflect discredit on the Creole population which provided him much political support. However, John M. Foote, superintendent of Terrebonne Parish, felt that the governor wanted to dismiss Roy because he had contributed to Hall's opponent in the election of 1912. According to the superintendent, Governor Hall was dissuaded from such action by some of the president's friends. He wrote:

Roy had his ups and downs. He had a host of friends all over the state — he also had a few enemies. When Luther Hall was running for governor in 1912, Roy contributed some money to the party opposing Hall. Some of Roy's enemies wanted Roy out of the Normal and used this information to best advantage.

At this same time, several parish superintendents were at the Normal giving a series of lectures and interviewing prospective teachers. I was then superintendent of Terrebonne Parish. The Board of Administrators were meeting that week and Governor Hall was in town for the meeting and to give Roy his notice of dismissal. Several of us went to talk to Hall in Mr. Roy's behalf. We were of some help to Roy because he was not dismissed that time, but was given a good lecture on politics and college presidents by Governor Hall.²⁰

Whether Governor Hall intervened or not, V.L. Roy was again named president of the Normal School and, despite later removal attempts, continued in that position for eighteen years.

¹⁹*The Natchitoches Times*, September 6, 1912.

²⁰Quoted in Douglas, "Roy," 24-25; *The Natchitoches Times*, September 6, 1912. Later President Roy attributed the continuing opposition to him to the influence of James B. Aswell. V.L. Roy to Judge Homer Bordelon, July 20, 1920, Roy Papers, University Archives, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana; cited hereafter as A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

Victor L. Roy, although frail and short in stature, was a man of boundless energy and decisive action. Sometimes he was abrupt in manners and speech and too defensive of his actions. Since he was not a professional educator by training, he did not espouse any particular educational philosophy. Yet his goals for the Normal School were easily discernible. Like his predecessors, President Roy demanded that the school receive state financial support commensurate with its position. "The teachers of this institution should be the best in the State, because these are teachers of teachers," he wrote, "yet the Normal School pays the lowest salaries to teachers of any State institution."²¹ The Normal, he felt, was "... a good school, one whose efforts are directed not at flourishes and a veneer of education but at the training of the minds and hearts of our students and the development of character."²² To accomplish these lofty ends President Roy realized the school needed higher academic standards, diversified curricula, better-qualified faculty, expanded physical facilities, and extended student activities. Only then would the Normal reach its potential of supplying Louisiana with the best trained teachers possible.

From the first days of his administration, President Roy worked methodically to enhance the Normal's academic image. One of his first priorities was raising the school's admission requirements. In 1911 the Normal curriculum consisted principally of high school subjects capped off with two years of teacher training. Consequently, an applicant to the Normal School was required to have completed only the first half of the eighth grade at that time.²³ In 1914 the entrance standard was raised to completion of the ninth grade or second year high school and by 1917 fulfillment of the third year of high school was demanded for admittance.²⁴ Beginning in 1918, the Normal School required high school graduation for admission which was the same standard Tulane and Louisiana State University maintained. The raising of admission requirements benefited the school by gradually permitting the total elimination of secondary school work and the inclusion of more collegiate level subjects.²⁵

²¹V.L. Roy to Board of Apportionment, March 19, 1915, *ibid.*

²²V.L. Roy to F. Authement, June 15, 1923, *ibid.*

²³*Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education To The Governor and General Assembly of Louisiana*, III (Baton Rouge, 1913), 122; cited hereafter as *Biennial Report of State Superintendent*, 1913, III.

²⁴*Ibid.*; *The Normal Quarterly of the State Normal School, Natchitoches, Louisiana, Catalog, 1919. Announcements for the Thirty-fifth Year. Roster of Students and Graduates*, VIII (April 1919), 16; cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly*, 1919; *Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, Louisiana, 1916. Normal Quarterly of the Louisiana State Normal School*, V (July 1916), 7; cited hereafter as *Sixteenth Biennial Report*, 1916; *Seventeenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, Louisiana, 1918. Normal Quarterly of the Louisiana State Normal School*, VII (July 1918), 11; cited hereafter as *Seventeenth Biennial Report*, 1918.

²⁵*Seventeenth Biennial Report*, 1918, 11; *Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, Louisiana, 1914* (n.p. [1914]), 11; cited hereafter as *Fifteenth Biennial Report*, 1914. V.L. Roy to John O. Evjen, October 19, 1920, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; V.L. Roy to Phanor Breazeale, n.d., *ibid.*

Additionally, the high school graduation requirement was essential to the Normal School's advancement to full collegiate rank through the granting of bachelor's degrees. In July, 1918, the Louisiana legislature authorized state institutions of higher learning to confer the degree of bachelor of arts or science on candidates who had satisfactorily completed a four-year course of study "above and beyond graduation from an approved high school." Each of the four years had to include at least 180 school days.²⁶ Under the provisions of this act, the Normal School Board of Administrators established a four-year course leading to the bachelor's of arts or science degree in May, 1919.²⁷ Within a year, nearly one hundred students were working toward degrees and in 1921 the State Normal School granted its first B.A. degrees to four graduates.²⁸ By 1928, the last year of President Roy's biennial reports, the school had graduated 355 students with bachelor's degrees.²⁹

The introduction of the baccalaureate program, in turn, led to the first change in the Normal School's name. By late 1920 there was movement building among the Normal's supporters to rename the institution to reflect its new degree-granting status. This was in line with general normal school development, since throughout the United States normal schools, as they eliminated high school work and instituted college level courses, sought to change their names to either state normal college or state teachers college.³⁰ President Roy wrote of the Natchitoches institution, "If this school is to rank as a college, it ought to be so named."³¹ His first choice for a new name was state normal college but by the spring of 1921, he had changed his preference to state teachers college. Just the opposite occurred in a referendum taken among the alumni. The early returns favored the name teachers college but the final alumni choice was normal college.³² E.O. Payne, rep-

²⁶"An Act To authorize institutions to confer degrees; and repealing all laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act," *Acts Passed by The General Assembly of the State of Louisiana at The Regular Session Begun and Held in the City of Baton Rouge on The Thirteenth Day of May, 1918* (Baton Rouge, 1918), 325.

²⁷Minutes, Board of Administrators, May 26, 1919, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *The Natchitoches Times*, May 30, 1919.

²⁸*Eighteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, Louisiana, 1920. Normal Quarterly of the Louisiana State Normal School*, IX (July 1920), 17; cited hereafter as *Eighteenth Biennial Report, 1920*; *Nineteenth Biennial Report of the State Normal College, Natchitoches, Louisiana, 1922. Normal Quarterly of the Louisiana State Normal College*, XI supplement (July 1922), 3; cited hereafter as *Nineteenth Biennial Report, 1922*; *The Shreveport Times*, June 2, 1921.

²⁹*Twenty-second Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Normal College, Natchitoches, Louisiana. The State Teachers College of Louisiana, 1928. Normal Quarterly of the Louisiana State Normal College*, XVII (January 1928), 6-7; cited hereafter as *Twenty-second Biennial Report, 1928*.

³⁰V.L. Roy to J.E. Keeny, November 20, 1920, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; V.L. Roy to J.W. Bateman, December 7, 1920, *ibid*.

³¹V.L. Roy to J.W. Bateman, December 7, 1920, *ibid*.

³²*Ibid*; V.L. Roy to John O. Evjen, March 18, 1921, *ibid*; E.O. Payne to V.L. Roy, April 1, 1921, *ibid*.



representing the alumni, appeared before the education committee of the constitutional convention to advocate the name of the Normal School be changed to Louisiana State Normal College. His arguments that the word "normal" remain in the institution's title were so effective that the committee unanimously adopted the alumni's recommendation. Later the committee's report was accepted by the convention for inclusion in the constitution of 1921. Thus the [Louisiana] State Normal School became the Louisiana State Normal College by the provisions of the constitution of 1921.³³ To many people, however, it was known, as it had always been, simply as the "Normal."

Besides renaming the Normal, the constitution of 1921 also significantly modified the college's administration by placing it and seven other state institutions under the supervision of a State Board of Education. The constitution specified that the legislature appropriate annually no less than seven hundred thousand dollars for the support and maintenance of eight institutions. The State Board of Education was given authority to apportion this sum among the institutions according to their needs. Any requests for additional legislative appropriations also had to have board approval.³⁴ Under these constitutional provisions, in 1922 the General Assembly established the State Board, consisting of three appointed and eight

³³Phanor Breazeale to V.L. Roy, May 8, 1921, *ibid.*; *Constitution of the State of Louisiana Adopted in Convention June 18, 1921* (Indianapolis, 1921), 224; cited hereafter as *1921 Constitution*. Although the Natchitoches institution had been named simply State Normal School when established in 1884, through the years "Louisiana" had sometimes been added to its name. Even the institution's own literature, such as catalogs, often included Louisiana State Normal School in its title. It was not unusual therefore for the 1921 Constitution to erroneously use the name Louisiana State Normal School.

³⁴*1921 Constitution*, 224-25.



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elected members, and defined its duties and powers in detail. Among those powers was the authority to appoint an executive committee of two members and the State Superintendent of Education, who served as chairman, for each institution to "perform such duties as may be required of them by the State Board of Education."³⁵ Under this arrangement the old six-man Board of Administrators of the Normal School was replaced by a three-person executive committee appointed by and responsible to the Board of Education. Thus when the new State Board of Education took office in January, 1923, the Louisiana State Normal College lost much of its local autonomy. Henceforth, it would be subject to the State Board in all educational matters.

Before the establishment of the State Board of Education, however, President Roy and the Board of Administrators enjoyed twelve years of locally directing the growth of the Normal. They were especially active in the development of modified and new curricula. As admission requirements were gradually raised, all secondary school work was relegated to the lower terms until it was finally completely eliminated in 1918. Of necessity, a curriculum reorganization followed. Advanced courses in languages, rural school organization, sociology, hygiene and sanitation, zoology, botany, physics, chemistry, history, economics, and mathematics filled the higher terms in place of secondary work. With the proliferation of courses, students were presented with the opportunity to concentrate in one of six areas: languages, science and mathematics, music and art, rural training, social science, and industrial (manual training) or domestic science. Although these specializations

³⁵"An Act to provide a State Board of Education and Parish school boards, defining their duties and powers, and providing for the administration and supervision of the public schools of Louisiana," *Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at The Regular Session Begun and Held In The City of Baton Rouge on the Eighth Day of May, 1922* (Baton Rouge, 1922), 206-7. The eight institutions placed under the control of the State Board of Education were the Louisiana State Normal College, Louisiana Polytechnic Institute, Southwestern Louisiana Institute of Liberal and Technical Learning, State School for the Deaf, State School for the Blind, Southern University, State School for Blind Negroes, and State School for Deaf Negroes. Under the new organization, the State Board of Education with the State Superintendent as *ex-officio* secretary exercised administrative control of the State Normal College. Among the duties of the State Board were submitting biennially a budget, electing the president and faculty, determining courses of study, appropriating legislative funds, fixing expenditures for new buildings, renovations, and maintenance and generally administering the affairs of the institution. The State Superintendent of Education was the "contact" person with the State Normal College and was responsible for carrying out board policies relative to it and reporting the college's statistics to the governor and legislature. The president of the Normal was responsible for carrying out the policies of the board. However, his duties were still extensive including recommending appointment, dismissal, promotion, and salary of all faculty and employees; modifications and additions of departments and courses of study; and construction and repair of buildings. He also submitted annual reports on the financial and general status of the Normal to the superintendent. Nonetheless, he could not as readily put his own stamp on the Normal College since he shared responsibility for its administration with the State Board and State Superintendent. *Report of The Survey Commission on The Louisiana State Normal College, The Louisiana Polytechnic Institute, The Southwestern Louisiana Institute* (State Department of Education, 1924), 15-19; cited hereafter as *Survey Commission Report*.

were not rigid curricula, they did allow students to prepare specifically for high school teaching.³⁶

President Roy was especially proud of the rural training course established in December, 1911, with J.W. Bateman as head of the department. Rural training was instituted in response to a demand for teachers principally prepared to teach in rural communities. Thus courses in agriculture, gardening, animal husbandry, poultry raising, dairying, home economics, farm implements and machinery, agricultural and homemaking club work, and rural school organization were offered to those interested in teaching in agricultural areas.³⁷ Within a few years, rural education became one of the most popular and worthwhile curricula at the Normal.

By 1914 the courses of study were further strengthened by additional advanced courses. At the same time special courses were instituted for those preparing to be primary and grammar grade teachers. Since these students were not required to take college level courses, except for English and professional courses, review courses in arithmetic, English grammar, history, geography, and physiology comprised their studies.³⁸ Under the reorganization, fifty-six credits were required for graduation including twelve in professional subjects, seven in English, five each in social sciences and physical sciences, and three each in mathematics, literary societies, and athletics. The remaining eighteen credits were "differentials" included in the several courses of study.³⁹ Obviously, the Normal School was in a transitory period of defining curricula designed to prepare teachers for the numerous and constantly changing teaching positions available in public schools. Four years of experimentation and innovation ensued before definite, detailed curricula emerged.

Finally, by 1918, two explicit curricula, the four-year professional course and the regular two-year course, had evolved. The two-year course which prepared teachers for elementary teaching, contained twenty-four scholastic units. A unit represented sixty recitations of fifty-five minutes each or the equivalent of one-and-a-half college hours. The prescribed subjects numbered seventeen units while electives accounted for an additional seven units. Electives had to be chosen in groups of three or four subjects from two departments or as continuations of prescribed subjects. The two-year course included two sessions of thirty-six weeks or six twelve-week quarters. Students were allowed to specialize in one of the following: primary grades, intermediate grades, grammar grades, music and art, manual training, rural schools, domestic science and art. Upon completion of the program,

³⁶ *Biennial Report of State Superintendent, 1913*, 122, 124.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 124.

³⁸ *The Normal Quarterly of the Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La. Annual Catalog. Announcements for Thirtieth Year, 1914-1915*, III (April 1914), 54; cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly, 1914-1915*.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 34.

a student received a Normal diploma which was a state license to teach in any of the public schools in Louisiana.⁴⁰

The second curriculum, the four-year professional course in preparation for high school teaching, required two additional sessions of thirty-six weeks. The number of prescribed courses increased to twenty-five while electives numbered twenty-three for a total of forty-eight scholastic units. Of the electives, nine had to be chosen from a "leading" major department, eight from a "second" major department, and six were "free" electives. The areas of specialization for four-year students were: physical sciences and mathematics, biological sciences and mathematics, English and history, Latin or French and social science, home economics, and manual training and mathematics. In addition to scholastic units, every Normal student had to complete for graduation two literary society credits, two penmanship credits, two library credits and one athletic credit for each quarter attended exclusive of summer quarters. After 1918, a student completing the four-year curriculum received a bachelor of arts degree. Through its two academic programs, the Normal School prepared teachers for every position in Louisiana's public schools with the exception of teachers of commercial subjects.⁴¹

After defining the on-campus curricula, President Roy immediately turned his attention to the need for extending the Normal's educational services to the teachers of Louisiana through correspondence courses. With the entry of the United States into World War I, many women students were leaving the Normal to fill teaching or business positions vacated by men entering military service. From an average need of five hundred new teachers annually in Louisiana, the number increased to one thousand in 1918.⁴² To allow the temporary teachers to continue their education, in 1918 the State Normal School inaugurated correspondence courses. Under strict guidelines, textbooks were prescribed, courses outlined, and examinations required. In the first quarter six women enrolled for correspondence study.⁴³ Within a year, all off-campus services were combined in the Extension Department, later renamed the Extension Division, under the direction of L.J. Alleman. Included in the division's activities were: correspondence study, exten-

⁴⁰ *Seventeenth Biennial Report, 1918*, 12; *The Normal Quarterly of the State Normal School, Natchitoches, Louisiana. The New Four Year Professional Course Including The Regular Two-Year Course*, VI (July 1917), 3, 6-7; cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly, 1917*.

⁴¹ *Seventeenth Biennial Report, 1918*, 12; *Normal Quarterly, 1917*, 3, 6, 9-10; *The Normal Quarterly of the State Normal School, Natchitoches, Louisiana. Catalog, 1921. Announcements for Thirty-seventh Year. Roster of Students and Graduates for 1920*, X (April 1921), 77; cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly, 1921*. In 1922 the curricula were modified somewhat so that students could specialize in home economics, rural education, music and art, English and history, mathematics and physical science, mathematics and natural science, and English and foreign languages in the four-year program and primary grades, intermediate grades, and grammar grades in the two-year program. *Nineteenth Biennial Report, 1922*, 5.

⁴² *The Normal Quarterly of the Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La. Annual Catalog, 1918. Announcements for Thirty-fourth Year, 1918-1919*, VII (April 1918), 36, 61; cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly, 1918; Normal Quarterly, 1919*, 18.

⁴³ *Normal Quarterly, 1918*, 61; V.L. Roy to the Faculty, June 8, 1918, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

sion classes, bureau of lectures and institutes, bureau of educational measurements, appointment bureau and alumni activities, department of visual instruction, and public school services.⁴⁴ Individual correspondence study, carrying a fee of ten dollars a course, became an integral and growing function of the Normal School. For groups of a five to ten minimum, extension classes were taught for a fee of ten dollars a student per unit course.

The appointment bureau and alumni activities, established in 1912, assisted school officials in locating suitable teachers and Normal graduates in finding desirable positions. It also directed all alumni activities. The department of visual instruction loaned films and slides to state high schools without cost. President Roy requested a special appropriation of ten thousand dollars in 1922 to expand the visual instructional services of the Normal, exclaiming "no better education investment can be made. . . ."⁴⁵ The department of public school service aided high schools in preparing debates, orations, and dramatic entertainments, and in organizing physical education courses and athletic contests. It also assisted teachers with any classroom problems they might encounter in their teaching. As if these services were not enough, the extension division also aided school superintendents and boards in conducting campaigns for school consolidation and schoolhouse building as well as fund raising.⁴⁶ The extension division was the outreach arm of the early Normal School and, as such, performed a vital function in servicing Louisiana's educational system. At the same time it gave the Normal instant recognition throughout the state.

President Roy's curricular innovations dwindled after 1923 because the Louisiana State Normal College fell under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Education which decided to adopt uniform curricula for all state teacher training institutions. By that time, despite opposition from President Roy and Natchitoches, there were two other state schools, Louisiana Polytechnic Institute and Southwestern Louisiana Institute, with teacher training departments. Neither program had been established by legislative enactment or State Board directive; rather, both simply developed in response to a demand for more and better prepared teachers.⁴⁷ Nonetheless, as early as 1913, Superintendent T.H. Harris had recognized the Normal's inability to supply adequately the number of teachers needed annually in Louisiana public schools and had recommended the creation of teacher-

⁴⁴*Normal Quarterly*, 1919, 65; *The Normal Quarterly of the State Normal School, Natchitoches, Louisiana. Catalog, 1920. Announcements for the Thirty-sixth Year. Roster of Students and Graduates for 1919*, IX (January 1920), 62-66; cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly*, 1920.

⁴⁵*Nineteenth Biennial Report*, 1922, 8.

⁴⁶*Normal Quarterly*, 1920, 63-66.

⁴⁷T.H. Harris to V.L. Roy, September 13, 1924, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

training departments at the Ruston and Lafayette industrial institutes and the establishment of two additional state normal schools. "The teacher is ninety-nine per cent [*sic*] of the school system, and it should be the purpose of the State to make it possible for every child to be taught by a competent teacher," he declared.⁴⁸

Natchitoches reacted angrily to Superintendent Harris's suggestions for competitive teacher-training institutions. A "Citizens' Committee," headed by Milton T. Cunningham, prepared a report of statistical information arguing against any increase in the number of teacher-training institutions in the state. Comparing Louisiana to other southern states, the report claimed Louisiana was not financially able to support additional teacher-training institutions, that an increase in the number of institutions would not necessarily boost the number of teachers proportionately, and that if supplemental normal facilities were needed, they could most efficiently and economically be provided at the already existing State Normal School.⁴⁹ However, the pressing demand for qualified teachers prevailed and, by 1914, both the Louisiana Industrial Institute and the Southwestern Louisiana Industrial Institute had teacher-training departments.⁵⁰ Years later, President Roy wrote Superintendent Harris questioning the legality of these programs. The superintendent, hoping to eradicate Roy's lingering doubts concerning the legal status of them, responded, "The legislative acts authorizing the establishment of the two schools in question give authority for the establishment of almost any and all departments that may be desired. So I think it is correct to assume that the development of teacher training in the two schools represents no violation of law."⁵¹ Subsequently, the general education act of 1922 authorized the State Board to approve teacher-training departments in normal schools and private colleges.⁵² President Roy was still not convinced that the two industrial institutes should compete with the Normal in teacher training or that their programs were legal. When an oversupply of elementary teachers developed in the late twenties and Normal graduates were without employment, he recommended that elementary teacher-training programs be eliminated at other state schools and that only the Normal be allowed to train elementary teachers since, "This school is the only institution specifically authorized by the constitution and by legislative enactment to train teachers for public service in the elementary grades." He contended that the other schools undertook teacher training on the basis of State Board resolutions and that twice the legislature had refused to authorize such programs.⁵³ The

⁴⁸*Biennial Report of State Superintendent*, 1913, III, 44, 46.

⁴⁹*The Natchitoches Times*, June 5, 1914.

⁵⁰*Survey Commission Report*, 14.

⁵¹T.H. Harris to V.L. Roy, September 13, 1924, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁵²T.H. Harris to V.L. Roy, September 25, 1924, *ibid*.

⁵³*Twenty-second Biennial Report*, 1928, 11. In 1919 the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce launched a movement to have the State Normal moved there. *The Natchitoches Enterprise*, September 4, 11, 18, 1919; *The Natchitoches Times*, August 29, 1919.

protests of President Roy and the Natchitoches citizenry produced no positive results in restricting teacher training to the Normal.

Thus, the State Board of Education had three state teacher-training programs, the New Orleans Normal, and several programs in private colleges to direct. In the matter of curricula, the board determined to prescribe definite courses of study which all teacher-training institutions would offer. The proposed curricula were prepared by a State Department committee headed by John R. Conniff and then reviewed and modified in a two-day conference attended by Dr. A.B. Dinwiddie, chairman of the State Board Committee on Education, the presidents of the teacher-training institutions, and members of their faculties. Although President Roy endorsed the curricula as amended in the conference, he later opposed them on two bases: first, that curricula should be made by the president and faculty of each institution and not the State Department of Education, and, secondly, he objected to the curricula themselves.⁵⁴ Again, President Roy's opinions were disregarded when the State Board adopted ten structured curricula and not majors around which courses of study might be developed. The ten board-approved, four-year curricula leading to a bachelor of arts degree were: science-mathematics, English-foreign language, English-social science, home economics, science-agriculture, music, art, grammar grade, intermediate grade, and kindergarten-primary. Seven of these were designed for high school work while three were for elementary teachers, supervisors, and principals. In choosing a curriculum, the Normal College warned students not to consider only their own personal likes and abilities but also the demand for teachers in prospective fields. The college reserved the right to restrict enrollment in curricula that were overcrowded and presented little opportunity for employment after graduation.⁵⁵ A year earlier the Normal had eliminated all two-year curricula leading to the Normal diploma with the provision that any student leaving after two years would receive an elementary professional certificate provided all required work in education had been completed.⁵⁶ However, in 1928, three two-year curricula, grammar grade, intermediate grade, and kindergarten-primary, were restored to the offerings of the State Normal College.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ *Minutes of A Meeting of The State Board of Education of Louisiana Held At The Louisiana State Normal College, Natchitoches, Thursday, November 12th, 1925* (T.H. Harris, 1925), 23-24; cited hereafter as *State Board Minutes, November 12, 1925*.

⁵⁵ *The Normal Quarterly State Normal College, Catalog 1927. Announcements for Forty-Third Year. Roster of Students and Graduates for Year 1926*, XVI (April 1927), 28; cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly, 1927*.

⁵⁶ *The Normal Quarterly of the State Normal College, Catalog 1926. Announcements For Forty-Second Year. Roster of Students and Graduates For Year 1925*, XV (April 1926), 25; cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly, 1926*.

⁵⁷ [*The Normal Quarterly of the State Normal College*], *Announcements for Forty-Fourth Year of the State Normal College, Catalog, 1928. Roster of Students and Graduates For Year 1927*, XVII (April 1928), 30; cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly, 1928*.

In addition to curricula revisions, President Roy raised the Normal College's academic standards by several other changes. Among these was the institution of a quality point system in 1926. A student earned four quality points for an A, three for a B, two for a C, one for a D, none for an E, and forfeited one for an F. One hundred and sixty quality points were required for graduation from a two-year program and three hundred and fifty for a bachelor of arts degree. To be on the honor roll, a student had to earn three times as many quality points as credit hours and a student's course load the next term was determined by the number of quality points earned in the previous term.⁵⁸ Superintendent Harris saw no value in the point system and questioned the wisdom of it. In his view a student either passed or failed in his work and was allowed to continue or not accordingly.⁵⁹ President Roy, on the other hand, felt that the point system was "the most effective scheme for promoting good work on the part of students that has ever been devised," and his faculty agreed with him. He felt that awarding quality points encouraged students to do the best work possible and pointed out that leading institutions throughout the nation had adopted the system.⁶⁰ This time his views prevailed as the State Normal College retained the point system.

Often the Normal president had to defend the institution's academic practices against change or attack. For instance, in 1923, the State Board recommended that the two-year diplomas issued by the Normal College be discontinued. Although he recognized that this would eventually occur, President Roy recommended that the awarding of diplomas be continued until the spring of 1925, so that those students already enrolled could complete their programs and receive the expected diplomas. He also voiced concern that enrollment would drop in the two-year programs if a teacher received the same first grade certificate for two years of college work that she received by examination. Young people, he felt, would enter teaching via examination and not professional training unless they received a distinctive diploma for normal work.⁶¹ President Roy won a partial victory. The Normal diplomas were continued until 1925, but no special designation was given certificates issued for Normal training.⁶² In 1923, President Roy also expressed anger with Louisiana State University's refusal to recognize totally the Normal College's credits and degrees. "... it makes me terribly sore to be dealt with as we have been all along by Professor [E.L.] Scott and certain committees of the faculty

⁵⁸ *Normal Quarterly, 1926*, 65; *Normal Quarterly, 1928*, 61-62.

⁵⁹ T.H. Harris to V.L. Roy, September 15, 1923, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁶⁰ V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, September 17, 1923, *ibid*.

⁶¹ V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, November 1, 8, 1923, *ibid*.

⁶² T.H. Harris to V.L. Roy, November 5, 1923, *ibid*. In 1924 the State Board of Education adopted a certification plan which eliminated earning certificates by examination. T.H. Harris to V.L. Roy, March 13, 1924, *ibid*. It also created a lifetime elementary certificate thus eliminating the necessity of renewing certificates every five years. T.H. Harris to V.L. Roy, March 31, 1924, *ibid*.

of the University. . . . It may be that I am not an impartial judge in this matter. . . . But I wish to say that I feel that this blow is like that of the pugilist who hits below the belt."⁶³ President Roy's rage forced Superintendent Harris into action. After several meetings with LSU authorities, the superintendent received assurances that work done at the Louisiana State Normal College, Louisiana Polytechnic Institute, and Southwestern Louisiana Institute would receive full credit at the university although transferring students might still have to make up certain deficiencies.⁶⁴ Still not satisfied with the university's answer, President Roy further recommended that a university committee study the state colleges' curricula and inform the presidents of conditions that would be placed on their graduates entering M.A. programs.⁶⁵ Although relations between the university and other state colleges did not improve vastly because of the jealousy between them, President Roy had ably defended the academic credibility of the State Normal College and, ironically, that of its two most serious competitors — the Lafayette and Ruston institutions.

Even though President Roy sometimes found himself defending the Louisiana Polytechnic and Southwestern Louisiana Institutes along with the Normal College in order to achieve a desired end, he more often fought the sister institutions. In particular, he scrutinized their policies and actions in light of State Board regulations and, when he found violations, he reported them to Superintendent Harris requesting remedial action. In 1922 the Normal President learned that other state institutions were violating a State Board regulation restricting a student to no more than one-half hour credit per week. Some state colleges were allowing students to exceed the maximum in summer sessions.⁶⁶ When President Roy protested, the State Superintendent promptly reminded the presidents of all state institutions of the board's policy, stating, "I am sure all of you will agree with me that a small number of hours thoroughly mastered is to be preferred to a larger number of hours not thoroughly mastered."⁶⁷ Obviously, not all agreed, for in 1924 Superintendent Harris, after receiving another complaint from President Roy, again warned the college presidents to abide by State Board regulations. At the time, President Roy felt that the Normal College was losing summer school students to other state colleges where they could earn more hours and thus graduate sooner.⁶⁸ The Normal president was not willing to overlook anything detrimental to the Normal College even if it meant fighting the State Board, State Superintendent, and/or other state institutions.

⁶³V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, September 24, 1923, *ibid.*

⁶⁴T.H. Harris to V.L. Roy, J.E. Keeny, and E.L. Stephens, October 20, 1923, *ibid.*

⁶⁵V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, October 22, 1923, *ibid.*

⁶⁶V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, January 30, 1922, *ibid.*

⁶⁷T.H. Harris to Thomas D. Boyd, A.B. Dinwiddie, V.L. Roy, J.E. Keeny, and E.L. Stephens, February 3, 1922, *ibid.*; T.H. Harris to Thomas D. Boyd, V.L. Roy, and E.L. Stephens, March 8, 1922, *ibid.*

⁶⁸V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, June 7, 1924, *ibid.*; T.H. Harris to V.L. Roy, J.E. Keeny, and E.L. Stephens, June 9, 1924, *ibid.*

Besides defending the academic integrity of the institution, President Roy also improved the image of the Louisiana State Normal by raising the standards of the faculty. In 1912 there were forty-five faculty members. Of this number, none held doctorates, four had master's degrees, fifteen bachelor's degrees, and twenty-six no degree. By 1928 the figure had jumped to eighty-seven with six doctor's, thirty-five master's and forty-one bachelor's degrees and only five with no degree.⁶⁹ Having an academic degree, however, was not all President Roy demanded of his faculty. He also felt that they should have normal training. "Mere scholarship is not its (a normal school's) sole purpose, although its importance in any scheme of teacher training is fully recognized and appreciated. What is required, over and beyond scholarship, is a training in those professional branches, theoretical and practical, which make for orderly and scientific procedure in the teaching process." The teacher must "not merely know what is to be taught, but also be trained in and practice the most approved educational methods."⁷⁰ President Roy applied these guidelines when hiring faculty and then complained bitterly when he could not pay them adequate salaries. As early as 1915 he notified Governor Newton C. Blanchard that the average salary at the Normal was below those of other normal schools and other state schools.⁷¹ Five years later he exclaimed "the teachers of the Normal School and its employees are generally unpaid [*sic*]." Comparing the State Normal's average salary with those of other normal schools in 1920, President Roy angrily concluded, "To assume that the State Normal School of Louisiana can, by some hocus-pocus, be operated as efficiently as the normal schools of other states at a salary cost which is from 11 per cent to 28 per cent lower than theirs, is folly." He noted that the previous year eleven teachers had resigned because of low salaries and others were threatening to leave "unless they can normally expect to be paid enough to maintain themselves and their families in the manner in which men and women in their positions are expected to do and should do."⁷² At times President Roy also found it difficult to hire teachers who could command higher salaries elsewhere.⁷³

⁶⁹H. Lee Prather, "President Victor Leander Roy, 1911-1929" in Fiftieth Anniversary of the Act of The Legislature Establishing The Louisiana State Normal School, 1884-1934" (typewritten); cited hereafter as Prather, "Roy"; *Normal Quarterly*, 1928.

⁷⁰*Normal Quarterly*, 1919, 17-18. Even though President Roy wanted his faculty to have normal training, he opposed a proposal of Superintendent Harris in 1924 to have all college faculty secure state certification. "Applying the principle of teacher certification which prevails in the graded schools and high schools to the members of the faculties of state colleges will be resented in some quarters I fear." Because of the expressed opposition of state college presidents, Mr. Harris dropped his proposal. V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, April 17, 1924, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; T.H. Harris to E.L. Stephens, J.E. Keeny, V.L. Roy, A.J. Caldwell, G.C. Huckaby and J.S. Clark, April 22, 1924, *ibid.*

⁷¹V.L. Roy to N.C. Blanchard and J.L. Bryan, February 13, 1915, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁷²*Eighteenth Biennial Report*, 1920, 8.

⁷³G. Vernon Bennett to V.L. Roy, April 6, 1921, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

The lack of adequate state support, although significant, was not the source of all salary problems at the Normal. Equally responsible were President Roy's personal prejudices. He felt that married men were more desirable than bachelors and thus should be paid more and that all men should be paid more than women of equal qualification. In 1917 the Normal had only one male faculty member paid as little as fifteen hundred dollars annually but only two women paid over that amount.⁷⁴ In 1918, when there were twenty-six male and twenty-nine female instructors at the Normal, the average salary for men was \$2,076.92 and \$1,328.57 for women.⁷⁵ The next year the average salaries of both men and women faculty increased but the disparity between them was reduced only about \$32.00.⁷⁶ By 1928 the average salary had risen to \$1,821 at the Normal, but the sex disparity continued. At this time, Louisiana Polytechnic Institute's average was higher while that of the Southwestern Louisiana Institute was lower.⁷⁷

V.L. Roy's discriminatory policies against women, along with some of his other unpopular practices, came under attack in 1919 when two women faculty members, together with some citizens of Natchitoches, leveled charges of wrongdoing and incompetency against him. The affair began with Miss Noelle Hart who was a French teacher and a dormitory matron at the Normal. In 1919 she refused to provide President Roy with certain information he requested and, as a result, suffered the "indignity" of being dismissed as matron. Thereupon, Miss Hart resigned her teaching position and appealed to the Board of Administrators for a redress of her grievances. The board decided that the Normal president "acted in the interest of the institution" in firing Miss Hart as matron, since she refused a legitimate administrative request for information and also upheld his decision not to pay her after the date of her resignation. Following Miss Hart's appearance, Miss Cecile Mandot went before the board to explain the circumstances of her resignation. After five years' service at the Normal, Miss Mandot contended that she had been "unjustly dealt with" by President Roy "whose policies, methods and administration she repeatedly attacked." Miss Mandot ended her presentation by submitting a list of specific charges against President Roy and asking for his dismissal. The administrators, hoping to end an unpleasant situation as soon as possi-

⁷⁴V.L. Roy to David Felmley, May 21, 1917, *ibid.*

⁷⁵*Public School Situation in Louisiana. Session of 1918-1919*, III of *Biennial Report, Sessions of 1917-18 and 1918-19* (Baton Rouge, n.d.), 20; cited hereafter as *Public School Situation, 1918-1919*.

⁷⁶*Public School Situation in Louisiana. Session 1919-1920*, I of *Biennial Report, 1919-1920 and 1920-21* (Baton Rouge, n.d.), 20; cited hereafter as *Public School Situation, 1919-1920*.

⁷⁷State Department of Education of Louisiana, *Annual Report for the Session 1928-29* (Baton Rouge, n.d.), 188.

ble, resolved that the charges against the Normal president were not well-founded, that his service was satisfactory, and that the request for his dismissal was denied. When the board voted on its resolution exonerating President Roy, however, T.L. Weaver, the resident administrator, voted in the negative. Fearing a possibly unfavorable investigation of his conduct, President Roy immediately made a very unusual motion. He suggested that his long-time friend and supporter, Superintendent T.H. Harris, conduct a thorough inquiry of his administration and report back to the board. President Roy's motion was approved and Superintendent Harris subsequently launched an investigation of his administration which resulted in 130 pages of testimony.⁷⁸

Superintendent Harris's investigation lasted six weeks and included not only those charges made by Miss Mandot but also other questions submitted by *The Natchitoches Times* and by T.L. Weaver on behalf of the Normal faculty and student body. In his inquiry, T.H. Harris interviewed faculty, senior class members, alumni enrolled in summer school, school and boarding club officials, prominent Natchitoches citizens, and V.L. Roy himself. He also attempted to contact by correspondence other Normal faculty who were away for the summer. The first part of Superintendent Harris's report based on these interviews dealt with twelve questions concerning President Roy's conduct of Normal School affairs posed by *The Natchitoches Times*. Among the newspaper's allegations of wrongdoing were Mr. Roy's holding stock in a grocery company dealing with the Normal, his favoring another company in buying school supplies, his letting the Texas and Pacific Railway use Normal facilities free of charge, his falsifying board minutes, his investing club funds in unregistered Liberty bonds, his permitting an insurance policy to lapse on a Normal building which subsequently burned, his allowing the Normal club to lose money the previous session, and his participating in locating and later floating a bond issue for surfacing Jefferson Highway when he was president of a land company that realized profits from these improvements.⁷⁹

President Roy was exonerated of all wrongdoing in every instance by T.H. Harris's investigation. The superintendent found that the Avoyelles Wholesale Company did receive large orders from the Normal, but they were made by the purchasing agent, or stewardess, and not by the president. Furthermore, Mr. Roy sold his stock in the company upon learning it was dealing with the boarding club. Concerning the Normal's business dealing with the Foster and Glassell Company of Shreveport, Superintendent Harris concluded that the prices offered were good and that there was no legal reason why the Normal should not deal with the concern even though one of its owners, J.C. Foster, was vice-president of the Normal's Board of Administrators. In regard to the railroad issue, Mr. Harris reported that Mr. Roy had actually gained concessions from the Texas and Pacific Railway

⁷⁸Minutes, Board of Administrators, May 26, 1919, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, July 10, 1919.

Company for their use of Normal property. Instead of just issuing a free pass to the school's president as in the past, the company agreed to remove some of its buildings and track and to build a spur to the Normal's coal house, thereby saving the school at least one thousand dollars annually for hauling coal. On the issue of board minutes, the superintendent concluded that no records were changed or falsified while the investment of club funds in Liberty bonds was done with the approval of the board and upon the recommendation of a Natchitoches banker. The issue of the loss of fifteen hundred dollars when an uninsured barn burned remained controversial. Mr. Roy stated that he relied on a local insurance agent to inform him when the policy expired but received no such warning. The agent, however, claimed that he notified the president both by phone and letter but received no instructions to prepare a new policy. Regarding the financial loss of the boarding club, Mr. Harris admitted it but explained that the administrators had refused to raise board costs until the surplus of the club had been exhausted. On the Jefferson Highway issue, the superintendent concluded that Mr. Roy had no intention of establishing a real estate company on the highway until some months after the passage of the bond issue for its improvement.⁸⁰

Following the disposition of the questions offered by *The Natchitoches Times*, Superintendent Harris reported on his investigation of the charges made by Miss Cecile Mandot. Her charges were more personal in nature and included, among others, that President Roy was incompetent, dishonest, prejudiced against women, untruthful, uncultured, and a man of rash judgment. Miss Mandot also claimed Mr. Roy was influenced by political motives, fostered a spy system at the school, had immoral men on the faculty, and was generally hated by the faculty and students. According to Mr. Harris's inquiry, most of these charges were unfounded, although he did admit that President Roy was a man of rash judgment and was "sometimes abrupt and shows a lack of consideration for the feelings of others with whom he deals. . . ." Concerning the charge of discrimination against women, Superintendent Harris reported that women faculty were paid less than men faculty but that this policy was based on board action and was not a presidential decision. Next he took up the claims of T.L. Weaver, the resident board administrator, that "the faculty was practically a unit in opposition to Mr. Roy, and that he was thoroughly disliked by a great majority of the students." After interviewing faculty members, students, and graduates, Mr. Harris concluded both charges were unfounded. Many faculty members felt the president was too impulsive and discourteous in his dealings with them but the majority demanded no change in administration. Meanwhile, the students stated that they had always received a "square deal" from President Roy.⁸¹

⁸⁰Ibid.⁸¹Ibid.

In the last section of his investigative report, Superintendent Harris submitted information he gathered from prominent Natchitoches citizens. Nine citizens were questioned extensively with notes being taken. Some twenty or thirty others were casually interviewed. Again, Mr. Roy was accused of losing his temper, acting upon impulse, and using hasty judgment. Of the nine citizens who gave statements, four felt that President Roy should resign, four believed he was an excellent president, and one was noncommittal. The interviews led Mr. Harris to state, "It is true that Mr. Roy would not sweep the city of Natchitoches in a popularity contest." He then completed his report with three general conclusions:

1. Mr. Roy has unquestionably, on many occasions, given exhibitions of hasty temper and failure to consider properly the feelings and judgment of those with whom he has dealt, with the result that frequently when questions were settled in the right manner, the feelings of teachers and others were uselessly hurt, and that in some instances serious mistakes were made.
2. There have been for a number of years or more teachers on the Normal School faculty who were out of sympathy with the president of the Normal School and made no effort to cooperate with him, but, to the contrary, it appears, have, to a considerable degree, been disposed to place obstructions in his way.
3. Mr. Roy has advanced the scholarship standards of the institution, he has given every ounce of his first-rate ability to the management of the school, and in the opinion of those best situated to judge, he has been highly successful in his efforts.⁸²

Unhappy with Mr. Harris's inquiry, C.M. Cunningham of *The Natchitoches Times* attacked the way the investigation was handled but to no avail. Superintendent Harris moved that his report be accepted and that President Roy's salary be raised to five thousand dollars immediately because of his successful administration of the Normal. Thus the Normal president emerged from the investigation with a raise, a vindicated record, but also some very bitter enemies who would not admit defeat.⁸³

V.L. Roy's critics made one last serious attempt to have him removed in 1921. This time they approached Governor John M. Parker with reports of "troubles" at the State Normal School and a request that Roy not be reelected president.⁸⁴ President Roy denied any problems at the school and attributed the enmity toward him to a small clique of Natchitoches men "who have always been opposed and who could no more be just to me than they could fly." Among his opponents he included C.M. Cunningham, T.L. Weaver, Ed Payne, Julius Aaron, and J.L.

⁸²Ibid.⁸³Ibid.⁸⁴T.H. Harris to V.L. Roy, April 21, 1921, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; V.L. Roy to J.W. Bateman, May 16, 1921, *ibid.*

Westbrook. He feared that these men had already persuaded the governor that local friction at the Normal could be uprooted only by his removal. Defending himself and expressing anger, President Roy threatened to leave schoolwork altogether. "What inducement is there for one to work as I have worked, with indomitable energy, to run the gauntlet of criticism and opposition merely because I have fearlessly stood for the right always — I say, what inducement is there for me to continue in school work in the state?"⁸⁵ Yet, he hoped that Governor Parker in fairness would allow his friends to present his case before making any decision on the Normal presidency. President Roy's despair deepened when a friend warned him that the governor was being forced to give concessions in order to pass his programs in the constitutional convention.⁸⁶

Fortunately for the Normal president, the Board of Administrators met May 30, 1921, at the Normal School with Governor Parker in attendance. V.L. Roy's supporters and friends seized the opportunity to defend him in a meeting with the governor at the school. President Roy joyfully described the aftermath of the meeting: "The governor was here Monday and looked fully into the situation. As the result he left here with his mind fully made up to have me reelected president. The final decision came at a conference held in the faculty room at three o'clock Monday afternoon when twenty-five of our leading citizens presented my case to the governor."⁸⁷ Governor Parker further expressed his confidence in V.L. Roy's administration when he named three new persons to the Board of Administrators in place of three members whose terms had expired. All the new appointees were acceptable to President Roy and included Mrs. D.C. Scarborough of Natchitoches, Henry E. Walker of New Orleans, and Dr. Emil Regard of Mansura. With a sigh of relief, President Roy proclaimed, "So far as I am informed, there will be no member of the Board in any way inimical to me."⁸⁸ In the months following his reelection, President Roy dismissed several faculty members whom he considered troublemakers and then reported to Superintendent Harris "that all forces are working together harmoniously."⁸⁹ A year later, he felt that "the faculty is stronger than ever and shows a spirit of cooperation that has too often been lacking on the Hill. . . ."⁹⁰ At last he could once again turn his undivided attention to improving the academic image of the State Normal School.

Despite increased admission requirements and improved academic standards, the Louisiana State Normal College had never gained recognition by the Southern

Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. As long as it was denied accreditation, the college's degrees were not fully recognized by some other institutions and its students suffered disadvantages in both obtaining teaching positions and pursuing graduate studies. "There is a lot of confusion and discussion at present because colleges do not accept credits from this Normal. The students are just now realizing that they are not on the accredited list and it is causing an uproar."⁹¹ President Roy became outraged when he learned that in 1921 the Southern Association had recognized Louisiana and Centenary Colleges, two private denominational institutions, but not the Louisiana State Normal College. This meant the Normal's graduates would not be hired by high schools seeking accreditation by the association. In his anger, President Roy accused C.A. Ives of the State Department of Education of deliberately omitting the State Normal College as well as the Lafayette and Ruston institutions from the list of associated colleges he recommended to the Southern Association. Mr. Ives denied the accusation explaining that the three state colleges were not considered for approval since they had not submitted formal applications.⁹² Neither Mr. Ives's explanation nor Superintendent Harris's assurances of his employee's good will toward the Normal placated President Roy. "So far as I am individually concerned, I can only discover, in the action he [Ives] took in this matter, another manifestation of his well-known antagonism to Normal and failure to appreciate the work of the institution and of its graduates."⁹³ He questioned Superintendent Harris: "Can you imagine how humiliating it is to me after twelve year's hard work raising the standards of Normal to ask why our A.B. graduates cannot fill positions in high schools recognized by the Southern Association? What answer can I make to our graduates when they ask questions on this subject?"⁹⁴

The controversy over C.A. Ives's role in the accreditation process severely strained the friendship between the Normal president and the superintendent until finally President Roy agreed to say no more about the matter. In 1923 the Louisiana State Normal College was finally placed on a list of approved colleges when President Roy himself attended the association's convention in Richmond, Virginia.⁹⁵ Three years later it was granted full accreditation. The Normal was already a member of the American Association of Teachers Colleges and in 1927 received an A-1 rating, the highest granted by the American Association.⁹⁶ Accreditation

⁸⁵V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, April 23, 1921, *ibid.*; V.L. Roy to J.W. Bateman, May 16, 1921, *ibid.*

⁸⁶J.W. Bateman to V.L. Roy, May 17, 1921, *ibid.*

⁸⁷V.L. Roy to J.W. Bateman, June 1, 1921, *ibid.*

⁸⁸V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, June 3, 1921, *ibid.*; T.H. Harris to V.L. Roy, June 6, 1921, *ibid.*; V.L. Roy to J.C. Foster, June 11, 1921, *ibid.*; *The Shreveport Times*, June 14, 1921.

⁸⁹V.L. Roy to J.W. Bateman, September 6, 1921, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁹⁰V.L. Roy to Honorine Galy, October 27, 1922, *ibid.*

⁹¹[Iona] L.B.[yrd] to S.M. Byrd, August 14, 1922, McClung-Byrd Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁹²V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, June 23, July 10, October 26, 27, 1922; T.H. Harris to V.L. Roy, July 18, 1922, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U. Iona Byrd felt that the lack of equipment was the real reason the Normal had not been accredited. [Iona] L. B[yrd] to S.M. Byrd, August 14, 1922, McClung-Byrd Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁹³V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, October 26, 1922, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁹⁴V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, October 27, 1922, *ibid.*

⁹⁵T.H. Harris to V.L. Roy, October 31, November 6, 1922, November 6, 1923, June 11, 1924, *ibid.*

⁹⁶Prather, "Roy"; *Twenty-second Biennial Report*, 1928, 8.

by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools and the American Association of Teachers Colleges was a great boost to the Normal's academic image and probably the most important achievement of the Roy administration.

The physical appearance of the State Normal College changed as dramatically as its academic image during the Roy years. Expanding grounds, new buildings, and landscaping were visible on the Normal campus. Altogether, President Roy added more than three hundred acres to the school in three purchases between 1914 and 1925. In 1914 he paid thirty dollars an acre for 62.33 acres of land adjacent to the rear western boundary of the campus to protect from contamination the watershed of a newly dug well.⁹⁷ This acquisition increased the Normal's property to 329 acres with the academic campus occupying about twenty-five acres, the athletic grounds eight acres, the garden ten acres, the fields thirty acres, the pecan grove twenty-five acres and the remainder open and wood pasture.⁹⁸ Two years later, in June 1916, 60.39 acres lying west of the original Normal tract were purchased from Timothy M. Widener for \$3,320. This acquisition gave the Normal School a straight stretch of land from Chaplin's Lake to the Natchitoches-Robeline road by doing away with a confusing meander.⁹⁹ In 1925, the opportunity arose to add significantly to the Normal College property when S. Nelken offered to sell a 240-acre tract lying immediately south of the institution for twenty-seven thousand dollars. President Roy and J.L. Bryan, a member of the college's executive committee, appeared before the State Board of Education seeking permission to make the purchase. They argued that the additional land should be obtained for three reasons: (1) the 150-acre alluvial portion of the tract was needed to raise ensilage for the dairy herd, (2) the remainder of the land was required for pasturage purposes, and (3) the land lying adjacent to the Normal campus would be developed into a housing subdivision should the college not acquire it. President Roy recommended that the boarding club and the college split the cost of purchasing the tract. The State Board, not having adequate funds at the time, voted to delay the acquisition until money was available.¹⁰⁰ A month later the board reversed its decision and authorized the immediate purchase of the Nelken tract with seventeen thousand dollars from college funds and ten thousand dollars from club funds. Of this sum, ten thousand dollars was to be paid immediately, an addi-

⁹⁷*Fifteenth Biennial Report, 1914*, 8; Minutes, Board of Administrators, May 28, 1914, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *Normal Quarterly*, 1926, 77.

⁹⁸*The Normal Quarterly of the Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La. Annual Catalog. Announcements For Thirty-first Year 1915-1916*, IV (April 1915), 21; cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly*, 1915.

⁹⁹Minutes, Board of Administrators, May 28, 1917, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁰⁰*Minutes of A Meeting of the State Board of Education of Louisiana Held At The Louisiana Polytechnic Institute, Ruston, Thursday, September 10, 1925* (T.H. Harris, 1925), 3-4; cited hereafter as *State Board Minutes*, September 10, 1925.

tional eighty-five hundred dollars in sixty days, and the remaining eight-five hundred dollars in 120 days with interest at 6 percent.¹⁰¹ With the addition of the Nelken tract, the Normal College's property totaled 650 acres. Except for forty acres that were planted as fields, all the newly acquired land remained in pasture. The three land purchases of President Roy permitted the continued expansion of the Normal campus and farm in the twentieth century.

On the twenty-five-acre academic campus new building construction was already underway before V.L. Roy assumed the presidency in July 1911. Under his direction it continued at a fast pace for the next eighteen years. Despite his successes in obtaining new buildings and improving old ones, President Roy, like his predecessors, complained bitterly that the state did not adequately support the State Normal School. In his first biennial report of 1912, he noted that, "In view of the demands made upon it and of its standing among educational institutions of the country, the Louisiana State Normal School is the most inadequately equipped Normal School in America." He continued, "In 1912 the Louisiana State Normal School has but one brick and three concrete buildings. All others are fire traps, and the school has no science building, hospital, gymnasium or assembly hall of sufficient capacity to accomodate [*sic*] the summer school student body."¹⁰² With dedicated hard work and obstinate determination, V.L. Roy was able to provide all of the major buildings lacking in 1912 and some additional ones needed as the institution grew. His major construction program comprised two notable periods: the years 1911 to 1914 and 1922 to 1927. In other years temporary or less costly building and improvement projects were realized.

In November 1911, the new Dining Hall, which was begun by President Aswell, was completed. Costing thirty-four thousand dollars, the reinforced concrete building contained dining facilities for one thousand students on the first floor while the second story provided sixteen dormitory rooms for thirty-two women students. The next spring, the old Dining Room Building was moved to a new location away from the girls' dormitories. Beginning with the summer quarter, it served as the first men's dormitory, housing fifty-six students, and "substantially" increased male attendance at the Normal.¹⁰³ Eight years later, President Roy described the converted men's dormitory as "... an ugly old frame building more than thirty years old, without the comforts and conveniences that college boys are entitled to..."¹⁰⁴ In 1912 a new women's dormitory was also begun. Completed in March 1913, at a cost of thirty-eight thousand dollars, "A" [Kate Chopin] Dormitory was a reinforced concrete building which housed 116 women, two to a room.

¹⁰¹*Ibid.*, November 12, 1925, 22-23.

¹⁰²*Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Normal School, 1912* (n.p., n.d.), 8; cited hereafter as *Fourteenth Biennial Report*, 1912.

¹⁰³*Biennial Report of State Superintendent, 1913*, III, 126.

¹⁰⁴*Eighteenth Biennial Report, 1920*, 10.

Like "B" [Carondelet] Dormitory, it had shower baths, sanitary toilets, ironing and trunk rooms, and was lighted by electricity and heated by steam. To provide sufficient electricity to light and heat the old and new academic buildings and dormitories, a new power plant was erected in 1914 at a cost of thirty-four hundred dollars. Kerosene and gas lamps became a remembrance of the past at the Normal. With the new dormitory, the Normal could accommodate 240 women students in fireproof buildings with two to a room and another three hundred in frame buildings with two, three, or four to a room.¹⁰⁵ Still, there was a severe shortage of dormitory space for both sexes. President Roy felt that "... the crying need of the State Normal School continues to be more and better dormitories. The State wants the Normal School to grow; but further growth is not possible without better and more ample dormitories for each sex."¹⁰⁶



The Dormitory Court

In addition to student living quarters, the Normal realized a rearrangement and expansion of its academic buildings and farm facilities in the early Roy years. Adhering to the earlier adopted plan of concentrating academic buildings in a court area separate from the dormitory units, Boyd Hall, a frame building erected in 1895, was moved to the west side of the academic court parallel to Caldwell Hall where it served as a science building. All science and domestic science classes and

¹⁰⁵Biennial Report of State Superintendent, 1913, III, 126; *The Normal Quarterly of the State Normal College. Catalog, 1924. Announcements For Fortieth Year. Roster of Students and Graduates For 1923*, XIII (April 1924), 48; cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly*, 1924; Crew, "Northwestern State College," 34.

¹⁰⁶Biennial Report of State Superintendent, 1913, III, 128.

laboratories were crowded into the old firetrap. In 1920, when he was seeking a new science building to replace Boyd Hall, President Roy stated, "The old frame structure ... was erected 24 years ago and was never intended to be used as a science hall. Hence it fails utterly to meet the needs of a modern school." To buttress his argument for a new facility, he pointed out that laboratory work for all chemistry classes was held in an "ill adopted and poorly equipped" twenty-six by thirty-two-foot room.¹⁰⁷ Meanwhile, on the north side of the academic court, where Boyd Hall had originally stood, a new model or training school was erected through the generosity of the people of Natchitoches. On February 8, 1912, the first ward of Natchitoches parish approved a five-mill tax for twelve years to defray the cost of construction. The three-story brick building's architecture was similar to Caldwell Hall and it cost, with equipment and furniture, sixty-five thousand dollars. When it was completed in April 1913, the new model school gave "... the institution the best training school equipment of any normal school in the South."¹⁰⁸ The appearance of the academic court was further altered in 1913 when the oldest structure on campus, the Bullard Mansion or Matron's Building or Donaho Building, was torn down because of its state of disrepair and its condemnation by the assistant state fire marshal. Only the four white columns which supported the front facade of the 1832 plantation house were left standing. To the students and friends of the Normal, the demolition of the building marked the sad ending of the early Normal with its fine traditions and history. The 1914 *Potpourri* solemnly declared, "Still facing the old bed where once the Red River flowed, greeting the morning as it rises, stands these four columns, the last that is left of the beloved Donaho Building, and the earlier Normal School. ..."¹⁰⁹ Later, covered with English ivy brought from Mt. Vernon by alumni of the Normal, the columns became the revered and honored symbol of the twentieth century institution to thousands of students and graduates. Although one of the columns had to be razed in 1937 because of its weakened condition, the three remaining columns stand proudly today as a remembrance of the university's distinguished past. Finally, farm facilities were also expanded with the erection of a new modern dairy barn in July 1912. Costing ten thousand dollars, it contained stalls for fifty milch cows, was well-lighted and ventilated, and incorporated improved sanitary building materials.¹¹⁰

While new construction was most notable on the Normal campus between 1911 and 1914, improvements were also made in existing facilities. For the comfort and safety of the students, a third boiler was added to the power house, an oil engine and generator were installed to light the school grounds at night, and a new water

¹⁰⁷Ibid., 126; *Eighteenth Biennial Report*, 1920, 9-10.

¹⁰⁸Biennial Report of State Superintendent, 1913, III, 128.

¹⁰⁹Fifteenth Biennial Report, 1914, 9; Crew, "Northwestern State College," 34; Ola Dot Overbey, "The Donaho Building," *Potpourri*, 1914. In 1937 one column was torn down because of its weakened condition and in 1949 two others were straightened and given new concrete bases. At that time the ivy was removed. Frances Rhodes, "Old Normal in the Nineteen Twenties" (M.A. research paper, Northwestern State College, 1969), 2, cited hereafter as Rhodes, "Old Normal."

¹¹⁰Biennial Report of State Superintendent, 1913, III, 126.

purification plant was erected. Academic departments and the library received new furniture, equipment, apparatus, and books. The School of Music acquired five new pianos and the library 756 feet of shelving. The Normal grounds were leveled and beautified and the athletic field fenced. Dairy operations were improved by the purchase of better milk cows and the expansion of meadows and fields. A vegetable garden was started to provide the boarding club with fresh produce.¹¹¹ These improvements, together with the building program, made the Normal a better and more appealing school by 1914. Yet there were still serious deficiencies in the physical plant that would have to be rectified if the Normal was to maintain and improve its standing among the normal schools of the nation.

Convinced that the State Normal School's future depended upon adequate appropriations for maintenance and support, President Roy continued to pressure the General Assembly for increased funding. In 1916 he asked for ninety thousand dollars for maintenance, noting that this sum represented an average of only forty-four dollars per student enrolled at the Normal. In comparison, Texas, Mississippi, and Arkansas averaged \$90.60 per student for maintenance. At the same time, according to the president, the institution's need for new buildings totaled \$460,000. Contained in this estimate was funding for the erection of nine structures including a men's dormitory, four women's dormitories, a gymnasium, an administration building housing a library, auditorium, and office space, a science building and an infirmary. Knowing that the state could not fund such a massive construction program immediately out of the general fund, President Roy listed a men's dormitory and an additional women's dormitory as priorities.¹¹² The legislature, however, failed to appropriate money even for the dormitories, so temporary quarters were erected to accommodate the school's bulging summer enrollment. In the spring of 1916, a girls' summer house, Girls' Camp #1, was erected. It housed fifty-two students and cost \$833.94 of club funds. The following year, two additional summer houses, Boys' Green House costing \$1,763.44 and accommodating fifty-seven students and Girls' Camp #2 costing \$1,254.85 of club funds and housing thirty-nine girls, were built. A sleeping porch was also added to the Dining Hall for \$222.87. Altogether, with the temporary structures, the Normal could accommodate 607 women and 105 men and even a few more if they were housed in the Boyd Hall auditorium as had been done in the past. Even if dormitory space was limited, the life of the Normal students was improved by the construction of a girls' swimming pool funded principally by the club, and the erection of a 387-foot pergola or covered walk joining the campus buildings.¹¹³

In 1920 President Roy renewed his battle for adequate appropriations from the state legislature. In January he asked for \$240,000 each for maintenance and

improvements for the next two years. Four months later he raised his request to \$295,950 for maintenance and the astounding sum of \$1,192,900 for buildings and improvements. The latter figure included funding for construction of all the buildings needed to bring the Normal up to the level of other leading normal schools. Admitting that such a massive building program would have to be spread over a six or eight-year period, President Roy argued, "Such a program would in the end be more economical to the State than the present haphazard scheme, by which the school develops piecemeal and only such buildings are erected as can be wrung out of an overburdened State treasury. But such a policy calls for an adequate and dependable revenue, not one which must be determined by the varying needs of other departments of the State." To provide the necessary revenues, he recommended that the General Assembly submit a constitutional amendment to the voters in November 1920, authorizing a one-quarter mill property tax dedicated to the State Normal School.¹¹⁴ Again President Roy's request was not fulfilled by the General Assembly which appropriated only \$252,000 for maintenance and \$380,000 for improvements for the next biennium. These monies would come from the contingency fund resulting from the collection of state luxury and license taxes and would only be available after other state debts had been paid. Even more disconcerting, since these taxes would not be collected until the spring of 1921, Superintendent Harris, with Governor John M. Parker's approval, urged the presidents of state institutions to erect only temporary buildings to meet emergency needs for a year or so "... when it is hoped that conditions will be more normal and permanent buildings can be erected at a reasonable cost." President Roy rejected the erection of temporary buildings as a waste of money.¹¹⁵

By 1921 it appeared that the only hope of the state's educational institutions for adequate funding was the constitutional convention meeting that spring. President Roy urged the convention to dedicate a three-fourths mill state tax to the support of the eight state educational institutions exclusive of the state university. When the education committee of the convention rejected the three-fourths mill tax and began debating a one-half mill tax, the Normal president agonized "... over the dark prospect lying before these schools." Writing Senator Delos R. Johnson, a member of the education committee, he estimated that under the one-half mill tax proposal, the Normal would receive not more than \$100,000 annually which would not meet the needs of the institution. He recommended as a possible alternative a one-half mill tax set aside for the four institutions of higher education — the Normal, the two industrial institutes, and Southern University. By eliminating the other four state schools, he felt that state support would be adequate, if not abundant.¹¹⁶ However, Senator Johnson found himself fighting Governor Parker when

¹¹¹Ibid., 128.

¹¹²*Sixteenth Biennial Report, 1916*, 10-11.

¹¹³Minutes, Board of Administrators, May 28, 1917, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U. To accommodate the large summer school enrollment in 1915, President Roy ordered a tent which would seat 1,000 persons erected in front of the academic building (Caldwell Hall) to serve as an auditorium for assemblies, *Current Sauce*, March 25, 1915.

¹¹⁴*Eighteenth Biennial Report, 1920*, 6-7, 9, 11.

¹¹⁵Circular No. 1068, July 13, 1920, T.H. Harris to E.L. Stephens, V.L. Roy, J.E. Keeny, October 4, 1920; J.M. Bateman to V.L. Roy, December 14, 1920, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹¹⁶V.L. Roy to J.W. Bateman, April 19, 1921; V.L. Roy to Senator Delos R. Johnson, May 7, 1921, *ibid.*

he suggested permanent funding for state institutions other than the State University. "I took the opportunity to bring up the question of fixing the support for the other eight institutions, and had a considerable tilt with the Governor on that subject. He seems hell bent, so the saying goes, against it."¹¹⁷ Nevertheless, Senator Johnson persisted and finally convinced the Committee on Taxation to recommend that the state appropriate no less than \$700,000 annually for maintenance at the eight schools leaving it to the legislature to appropriate funds for improvements and buildings upon the recommendation of the State Board of Education. Even with this modest proposal, he still expected opposition from the governor whose primary interest was the greater Agricultural and Mechanical College at the state university. "This seems to be the very best we can do in the Convention, and I am sure that the Governor will train his guns on this proposition, and possibly defeat it," declared the senator.¹¹⁸ Contrary to his prediction, the constitutional convention accepted the recommendation of the tax committee thus providing the schools with permanent maintenance funding.

Even though funds for maintenance were assured under the Constitution of 1921, the State Normal still had to depend on the legislature for financing new buildings. President Roy considered using some of the \$217,000 he would receive as the college's share of the \$700,000 appropriation for construction. Doubting the wisdom of such a move, he sought Superintendent Harris's opinion on whether any of the maintenance sum could be diverted to building projects without jeopardizing the appropriation. Mr. Harris advised that the State Board of Education expected that educational institutions would spend the entire amount on support and upkeep and not on new buildings or equipment.¹¹⁹ Feeling that he could not wait any longer for state support, although he submitted a \$100,000 building request, President Roy sought other means to finance his building program. He began construction of a new women's dormitory in 1923 with \$47,500 he received from the 1920-1922 contingency fund. The remaining twenty thousand dollars required for the building he planned to obtain from a small sum the college had saved and a ten thousand dollar loan from the boarding club. Like President Caldwell earlier, he was scrimping, saving, and borrowing money to build the Normal and doing it successfully. "C" [Agnes Morris] Dormitory was begun in January and opened for the fall quarter of 1923. Costing \$72,202.26, it was designed to accommodate one hundred women, two to a room, but often housed 144 students, three to a room.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷Delos R. Johnson to V.L. Roy, May 13, 1921, *ibid.*

¹¹⁸*Ibid.* President Roy felt that the State University was favored in appropriations at the expense of the Normal College. "If the State can give the State University \$7,000,000 in five years for buildings and improvements, it certainly should be able to give the State Normal College, which has as large an enrollment as the University, the sum of \$100,000 per annum." V.L. Roy to James P. Guillot, May 10, 1922, *ibid.*

¹¹⁹V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, January 20, 1922; T.H. Harris to V.L. Roy, January 23, 1922, *ibid.*

¹²⁰V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, March 16, 1922; V.L. Roy to J.C. Foster, October 18, 1922, *ibid.*; Crew, "Northwestern State College," 35.

In 1922 President Roy had also intended to build a men's dormitory out of contingency funds, but, by that time, it was evident the money would not be available. "... I still think that this building should be erected whether we receive the appropriation or not," he declared, explaining that he expected to pay for the structure out of the school's monthly maintenance appropriation of approximately eighteen thousand dollars. Whenever construction costs exceeded what he could save from the maintenance fund, he planned to borrow additional funds from local banks. Again, President Roy sought Superintendent Harris's approval of the project. The superintendent, reversing his earlier opinion, approved the rather unorthodox method of financing the men's dormitory, providing President Roy was sure he could pay for it as outlined. Otherwise, the superintendent urged him to "... let the matter rest until the money is in sight."¹²¹ President Roy characteristically could not "let the matter rest." Within two months he let the contract for the new men's dormitory, and in December 1922 the building was completed. Located west of the athletic field on Jefferson Highway, the first permanent men's dormitory was a two-story brick building which cost seventy thousand dollars. It contained twenty-four bedrooms, parlor, shower and toilet rooms on the first floor and twenty-seven bedrooms and a matron's apartment on the second floor. With pride, President Roy predicted that "... the erection of this building will mean an increased attendance of men — a thing much to be desired in the development of the college."¹²² Even with the two new dormitories, there was not enough on-campus housing because of the phenomenal growth of the student body. By the fall of 1923, the Normal was once again turning away students because of a lack of dormitory space.¹²³

Meanwhile, President Roy turned his attention to other pressing building needs of the Normal. Among these were a gymnasium and an infirmary. As early as 1920 he had pointed out that the school had practically no facilities for gymnastic work. The girls' physical activities were limited to one room in Boyd Hall without proper equipment while the boys had no space at all. The women also had a swimming pool which the young men lacked. In case of illness, the girls went to an infirmary of sorts located in the rear of one of the dormitories, but the boys had no infirmary facilities whatsoever.¹²⁴ In the fall of 1923 the college's first gymnasium building

¹²¹V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, March 16, 1922; T.H. Harris to V.L. Roy, March 18, 1922, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹²²V.L. Roy to J.C. Foster, October 18, 1922, *ibid.*; *Normal Quarterly*, 1924, 48. This building was later named Scheib Hall.

¹²³Minutes of Meeting, Executive Committee of State Normal College, September 5, 1923, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹²⁴*Eighteenth Biennial Report*, 1920, 10.

was completed. Located on the site of the old men's dormitory, facing Jefferson Highway and the athletic field, it housed a fifty-five by 102-foot gym with a seating capacity of fifteen hundred, two thirty-five by fifty-foot activity rooms, classrooms, office space, examination room, and ample showers and lockers. The main hall served as an indoor track. Constructed at a cost of sixty-five thousand dollars, the gymnasium met "... one of the greatest and longest felt needs of the college."¹²⁵ The next year the new \$24,500 infirmary was opened. The fireproof building included a large ward, an isolation ward, a doctor's consultation room, an operating room, and a dietary kitchen. All students not able to attend class because of illness were required to report to the infirmary where a graduate nurse was in charge.¹²⁶

Considering Louisiana's depressed economic conditions, the disruptions of World War I, and the parsimonious attitude of the state legislature, V.L. Roy had been amazingly successful in building the physical plant of the State Normal by 1924. Of the nine buildings he had recommended in 1916, four, a men's dormitory, a women's dormitory, a gymnasium, and an infirmary, had been constructed. Additionally, temporary housing units had been erected to meet immediate needs. If the early Roy years saw a struggle for state appropriations, the future would experience an all-out war. Superintendent Harris, in his 1923-24 report, stated, "Old and dilapidated buildings should be renovated, frame structures should be obliterated, and additional dormitory and classroom facilities should be provided. These needs exist at all the state schools, and especially at the State Normal College." Nevertheless, the Tax Commission recommended an increase of only fourteen thousand dollars per year in the Normal's appropriation for the next biennium.¹²⁷ Even more depressing, the newly elected governor, Henry Fuqua, vowed to keep his campaign promise that no additional taxes would be imposed on the people of Louisiana by the legislature.¹²⁸ At this juncture, the State Normal College decided to tap one of its best, but as yet unused, sources for wringing funding out of a reluctant legislature — its Alumni Association.

By 1925 there were Normal graduates living in every section of Louisiana and serving in every parish school system. The State Normal had graduated more than forty-eight hundred students from its two-year and four-year courses and some ten

¹²⁵V.L. Roy to J.C. Foster, October 18, 1922, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *Normal Quarterly*, 1928, 72; Crew, "Northwestern State College," 40. This building is now the old Women's Gym.

¹²⁶*The Normal Quarterly of the State Normal College, Catalog 1925. Announcements for Forty-first Year. Roster of Students and Graduates For 1924. Natchitoches, Louisiana*, XIV (April 1925), 65; cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly*, 1925; *Normal Quarterly*, 1928, 73.

¹²⁷*Twenty-first Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Normal College. Natchitoches, Louisiana. The State Teachers College of Louisiana*, 1926. *Normal Quarterly of the Louisiana State Normal College*, XV (July 1926), 9; cited hereafter as *Twenty-first Biennial Report*, 1926; Circular No. 1818, April 1, 1924, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹²⁸T.H. Harris to V.L. Roy, April 8, 1924, *ibid.*

thousand additional teachers had received partial training through summer sessions and special courses while another thousand had engaged in extension work. A study in 1924 of Louisiana's teaching personnel, excluding Orleans parish, showed that the Normal was furnishing more than 57 percent of the teachers trained within the state.¹²⁹ That year, President Roy wisely decided to organize the thousands of alumni and other friends of the college in support of his building requests. In the summer he met with various groups, alumni, students, faculty, and friends of the Normal, to urge them to work for the college. As a follow-up, the Alumni Association president, G.O. Houston, who was also Assistant Superintendent of Caddo Parish schools, wrote letters to members of the association and spoke to its annual banquet in Shreveport, outlining the needs of the Normal. Thus was launched the first alumni campaign to help build the State Normal. In the following months, additional meetings were held throughout the state to educate people on the building needs of the Normal and, in May 1925, Assistant Superintendent Houston wrote a letter on the behalf of the Alumni Association to the State Board of Education, citing the outstanding service of the Normal to public education and decrying the inadequate facilities of the college. He reminded the State Board that the legislature had appropriated only \$521,224 for building purposes in the college's forty-year existence — a sum far less than Alexandria and Shreveport were spending on their new high school buildings. As a result, he pointed out, the Normal president had to borrow money and use maintenance funds for building purposes. He also emphasized that the frame dormitory and classroom buildings on the Normal campus were fire hazards which endangered the lives of hundreds of students. Assistant Superintendent Houston concluded his letter by expressing confidence that if the State Board made a strong recommendation to the legislature, adequate funds would be appropriated for a comprehensive building program at the Normal. The building program the Alumni Association envisioned cost a whopping \$1,440,000 and included an education building, science building, auditorium and administration building, library building, five women's dormitories, a men's dormitory and dining facility, industrial arts building, school of music, and men's gymnasium and stadium. The State Board agreed in general with the Alumni Association's recommendations and promised to submit them to the governor and legislature at the next session. Quite properly, the board pointed out that only the legislature could appropriate money. In regard to the fire hazards at the college, the board ordered the state fire marshal to investigate immediately and report back to it.¹³⁰

¹²⁹Louisiana State Normal College Alumni Association (G.O. Houston) to President and Members of State Board of Education, May 2, 1925, *Minutes of A Meeting of The State Board of Education Held in New Orleans, La., Thursday, May 7th, 1925 and Continued To Friday, May 22nd, 1925 In the City of Alexandria, La.* (T.H. Harris, 1925), 13.

¹³⁰*Ibid.*, 13-15; Address by G.O. Houston, June 8, 1929, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

The state-wide meetings and Houston's letter to the State Board were only the first shots in a war to obtain building funds for the State Normal College. During the Normal's third homecoming, May 30, 1925, G.O. Houston gave a rousing speech calling the Normal "... the only institution in the state which has influenced every home in Louisiana, and which is truly the 'mother of education in Louisiana'."¹³¹

The first positive result of the Alumni Association's campaign came in July 1925 when the state fire marshal condemned Boyd Hall and designated East and West Halls as fire hazards. He also recommended improvements to other buildings. These included installing a sprinkler system on the first floor of Boyd Hall, equipping sleeping porches and pavilions with "Indian clubs" to break out the screens in case of fire and the adding of exterior stairways and fire escapes to several buildings. All the recommendations of the fire marshal were immediately carried out by President Roy.¹³² Meanwhile, the Alumni Association stepped up its campaign. In the summer of 1925 it contributed \$1,067 and the student body and student organizations, \$1,251.62, to publicize the needs of the Normal "in every nook and corner of the state." The state press, members of the legislative delegation, and the Natchitoches Chamber of Commerce joined the campaign. The result of the Alumni Association's involvement was phenomenal, considering the Normal had received only \$521,224 for building purposes during the previous forty years. In November 1925 the finance committee of the State Board recommended six hundred thousand dollars for buildings and equipment at the Normal for the biennial period beginning July 1, 1926. Although the Tax Commission and legislature later whittled this sum down, the college still emerged with an appropriation of \$335,000 and a contingent appropriation of \$135,000 or a total of \$470,000.¹³³

V.L. Roy had already compiled a revised list of the Normal's building requirements. He once again emphasized the need for a modern science building and an auditorium-administration building. To these he added a fireproof library building to replace the old 1898 frame structure then in use and an education building to house the department of education and the training school. The education department was crowded into an old dilapidated frame building, while the training school had outgrown its quarters. President Roy also called for the replacement of five frame women's dormitories with brick or concrete structures and an additional men's dormitory with separate dining facilities. Finally, the Normal president cited the need for a building to house the School of Music which had 450 students enrolled, and a structure to accommodate the industrial arts.¹³⁴ Although he declared his building program "... in no wise excessive or extravagant,"¹³⁵ he

¹³¹"Alumni Meet For Reunion," newspaper clipping, May 31, 1925, *ibid*.

¹³²*State Board Minutes*, November 12, 1925, 12-13.

¹³³Address by G.O. Houston, June 8, 1929, Roy Papers, University Archives, E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *Twenty-second Biennial Report*, 1928, 13.

¹³⁴*Twenty-first Biennial Report*, 1926, 9-11.

¹³⁵*Ibid.*, 9.

must have realized it would take extended appropriations and years to complete. But in his opinion, nothing less would do for the Normal College.

Upon obtaining the 1926-1928 building appropriation, less the contingent amount of \$135,000 which once again was not available, President Roy immediately launched another construction spree on the Normal campus. A fourth women's dormitory, "D" [Audubon] Dormitory, was erected in 1927 at a cost of \$71,600. Housing 144 students, it was similar in structure and design to the earlier dormitories and was located in the dormitory court.¹³⁶ Within the next year, two more buildings were under construction — a new president's home and an education building. The old president's residence, a two-story, frame structure, was described as "... an antiquated and undignified house, added to and patched up during a half century ..." eight years earlier when President Roy requested a new one. It had served as the priest's house during the convent years before the establishment of the Louisiana State Normal School. The new president's home, costing approximately twenty-five thousand dollars, was located just to the right of the college's main entrance gates. It was a two-story Tudor-style brick house containing entertaining facilities on the first floor and living quarters on the second.¹³⁷ The new education building was also of brick construction and was located in the academic court across from the old training school. To provide space for the new structure, East and West Halls were torn down. It was a three-story brick structure designed to house the elementary practice school and the School of Education. Costing \$210,000 and named for the former superintendent of public education, Warren Easton, the building contained thirty-two classrooms, thirteen teachers' workrooms, six teachers' offices, a principal's office, faculty room, two home economics laboratories, cafeteria, auditorium, library, lecture rooms, kindergarten department, psychological laboratory, first-aid room, and playroom. The construction of Warren Easton meant that the old vacated three-story brick training building could be used for other purposes. After extensive renovation, it was converted into a Science Building, housing the biological, chemical, physical, and home economics departments formerly located in Boyd Hall.¹³⁸

The new education building was formally dedicated June 8, 1929,¹³⁹ and was the last major event over which V.L. Roy presided as president of the Louisiana State Normal College. Within less than a month he would be replaced by William White Tison and the longest tenure of any Normal president would come to an end.

¹³⁶*Normal Quarterly*, 1927, 80; Pettis, "Development of State Normal College," 16; Crew, "Northwestern State College," 35.

¹³⁷*Eighteenth Biennial Report*, 1920, 11; Crew, "Northwestern State College," 39.

¹³⁸*Normal Quarterly*, 1928, 71-75; [*The Normal Quarterly of the State Normal College*]. *Announcements for Forty-Fifth Year of The State Normal College. Catalog, 1929. Roster of Students and Graduates For Year 1928*, XVIII (April 1929), 71; cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly*, 1929.

¹³⁹Address of G.O. Houston, June 8, 1929, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

Just as Victor Leander Roy's appointment had been controversial, so was his removal from the State Normal College presidency. Throughout his eighteen-year tenure there had been continual covert, and sometimes overt, opposition to his administration. While much of the antagonism was due to President Roy's own personality, some of it was caused by his unpopular policies and especially his strict discipline at the college. Still other opposition was due to political factionalism. By 1928 Normal students joined the chorus of protest against the president's policies when they sent a communication to the State Board of Education complaining that "the administrators of the Normal College are too severe in matters of discipline" and inviting an investigation by the Board with the view of instructing the management of the Normal College "to grant the Normal College students considerably more freedom and liberty than they now enjoy." Although Superintendent Harris, after questioning the students felt that there was little substance to their charges, he recommended that the board appoint a committee to investigate the students' complaints. Subsequently, a three-person committee composed of board members E.A. Conway of Shreveport, chairman, Mrs. Eleanor Meade of Gramercy, and Walter J. Burke of New Iberia was appointed to visit the Normal and meet with the dissatisfied students.¹⁴⁰ On March 25, 1928, the committee met with the Normalites singly and collectively and also with President Roy, H.L. Prather, Dean of Men, and Ethel L. Hereford, Dean of Women. After hearing everyone involved, the on-site committee concluded "... that the student privileges at the State Normal College are entirely reasonable and satisfactory" and that there was "... nothing ... to warrant the State board of Education taking any hand in the discipline of the State Normal College." Additionally, the committee reported that all the students interviewed recognized the high standing of the college throughout the state, expressed pride in the institution, and none criticized the academics of the Normal. The committee ended its report by stating "... President Roy and his Faculty are careful, earnest and considerate in their regulations to protect the students at the College, and are rather to be commended than criticized for their regulations."¹⁴¹ Once again President Roy was vindicated of improper policies at the Normal, but, ironically, the fact that such an investigation had taken place became a weapon the next year in the hands of those who wanted to get rid of him.

Victor L. Roy's resignation from the State Normal College in 1929 was politically orchestrated by the newly elected governor, Huey Pierce Long, and represented, in many minds, an unprecedented gubernatorial interference with the state

¹⁴⁰ *Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, March 10, 1928, Bulletin No. 121 (T.H. Harris, 1928), 4-5.

¹⁴¹ *Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, April 20, 1928, Bulletin No. 123 (T.H. Harris, 1928), 80-81; *The Natchitoches Enterprise*, March 29, 1928; for an interesting account of the student protest see Lucille T. Carnahan's article "LSN's Early Years Were Full of Turmoil" in the *Natchitoches Times*, October 4, 1984.

educational institutions. Although the circumstances surrounding President Roy's resignation did not become public until the impeachment proceedings of April 1929 involving Governor Long, he was "hounded and harrassed" into leaving the Normal. According to Roy's own testimony, the first word of his probable ouster came to him in February 1928 through Mr. James W. Bolton of Alexandria who reported that the governor planned to remove him because he had not voted for him in the recent election. Upset with the rumor, President Roy met with the governor the next month in Shreveport where Long reportedly quipped, "Doctor, as a matter of fact you guessed wrong in the primary election, didn't you?" To which, the Normal president replied, "Yes, Governor, I suppose I guessed wrong." Even after the Shreveport meeting, Superintendent T.H. Harris, a long-time supporter and friend, advised President Roy that he would not be removed if he were "easy." As months passed with no further mention of his dismissal, President Roy's optimism rose. Then he learned that Representative Cecil McClung of Natchitoches was opposed to him in the special legislative session of December 1928. A few days later, on Christmas Eve, he received a communication from Governor Long charging that one of the Normal's faculty members, M.E. Downs, had "reflected on his administration in a class on government." After investigating the charge, President Roy notified the governor that Professor Downs and his students both denied the accusation.¹⁴² Christmas 1928 must not have been a joyous time in the Roy household!

In the new year, according to the Normal president, Superintendent Harris visited him in Natchitoches where he reported that the governor was again considering his removal, in fact, that he was "bent" on it, because certain local leaders and politicians demanded his dismissal. However, Mr. Harris assured his friend that Governor Long had promised to find him a teaching position at Louisiana State University after his removal from the Normal. The next day the governor himself confirmed Harris's statements concerning political pressure and the promise of a university position in a conversation with President Roy. As Roy admitted, he was never asked to resign by Governor Long, but the Normal president felt that, "He [Long] drove me to it." Convinced that Governor Long controlled the State Board of Education, Roy felt "... that if I opposed the governor's desires it would result

¹⁴² *The Shreveport Times*, April 11, 1929; *Official Journal of the House of Representatives of The State of Louisiana At The Fifth Extra Session of The Legislature* (Baton Rouge, 1929), 342-44; cited hereafter as *Official House Journal, Fifth Extra Session*. According to John M. Foote, V.L. Roy not only voted for Long's opponent but gave money to his campaign. "In 1928 Roy had not voted for Huey Long, and did contribute money to the opponent. Mr. Roy was called by Huey to Baton Rouge and was asked by Huey if he had contributed money to the campaign of the other party. Roy said he had and Huey said, we will have to put a stop to that." Foote continued, "In the next few weeks, Long gained control of the State Board of Education and became a close friend to T.H. Harris. Up to this time the State Board was fairly independent of the governor. As ex-officio member of the board, Long put pressure on this group and a majority came over to his side. Along came Harris and out went Roy." Quoted in Douglas, "Roy," 25.

in the greatest school row in the history of the state." Even though he knew his removal was imminent by this time, President Roy still did not want to leave the Normal College so he suggested to Governor Long that the State Board create the position of president emeritus and that he be named to the new job. The board, however, rejected the idea of a president emeritus and, after a long, heated meeting between Governor Long, President Roy, and members of the State Board, Roy agreed to submit his resignation.¹⁴³ The next day he submitted a terse letter of resignation to the board:

Baton Rouge, La.,
February 27, 1929

The State Board of Education
Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Gentlemen:

I hereby tender my resignation as President of Louisiana State Normal College, effective at the end of the present year, June 30, 1929.

Very respectfully,
V.L. Roy¹⁴⁴

When a roll call vote was taken on V.L. Roy's resignation, six members of the State Board voted to accept it, three voted to reject it, and two abstained. Those voting no were Mrs. Meade, Mr. Burke, and Mr. Allen Sholars of Monroe, while those not voting were President H.H. White and Doctor A.B. Dinwiddie. After the roll call, some board members made statements explaining their votes. Among these were Meade, Burke, and Sholars who had cast the negative votes. All three felt that President Roy's removal represented gubernatorial usurpation of board power and feared the disastrous effect on Louisiana's education system of such executive interference. Mr. Burke declared, "The removal, as I term it, of Mr. Roy, is at the insistence of the Governor of the State and I protest against the Governor of the State undertaking to direct the affairs of the educational institutions of this State which are under the control of members of this Board, elected in greater part by the voters of the various districts." Mrs. Meade explained, "I voted no on this motion because I felt that Mr. Roy was resigning not because he was inefficient but because the Governor of our State wanted him removed." Mr. Sholars, decrying the politicalization of the Board, exclaimed, "I vote no as a protest against a palpable attempt at domination of the rights, privileges and duties of this Board on the part of the Governor of the State and an attempted usurpation of the powers of this Board."¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³Official House Journal, Fifth Extra Session, 344-49.

¹⁴⁴Official Proceedings of State Board of Education, February 27, 1929, Bulletin No. 151 (T.H. Harris, 1929), 6; hereafter cited as *Official Proceedings of State Board*, February 27, 1929.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., 6-8; *The Shreveport Times*, February 28, 1929; *Official House Journal*, Fifth Extra Session, 390, 397.

Governor Long was not without his defenders at the State Board meeting. Superintendent Harris praised V.L. Roy's work as an educator but also defended Governor Long as "a staunch friend of public education." Denying that the Normal president was coerced into resigning, Harris contended that, "Mr. Roy has been a success in every educational position that he has filled and he has devoted his life to education. He has been a success as president of the Normal College. I think he should continue in that position, but he has chosen to resign. He wishes to be relieved of his duties, and I think his desire should be respected and granted." In speaking of the governor, Mr. Harris declared, "I did not support him. I did not want him elected Governor, but since his election . . . it is my opinion that Governor Long has done more for education since he has been in office than any other Governor in the same length of time. I do not believe that public education has ever had a stauncher friend." He continued, "... Governor Long maintained consistently that the criticisms of Mr. Roy's administration were in his judgment such as to make it for the best interests of the Normal College for Mr. Roy to retire, but at no time did he demand his resignation." Of those voting to accept Mr. Roy's resignation, only Mr. Conway spoke. Regretting what he called their "intemperate language" he questioned his colleagues' going "... away [*sic*] out of the record in explaining their negative vote against the acceptance of Mr. Roy's unqualified resignation." Mr. White, representative of the Eighth Congressional District, who had not voted because he presided over the meeting, felt compelled to state that if he had voted, he would have voted no for two reasons: first, as representative of the Eighth Congressional District which included the Normal College, no complaints against Mr. Roy's administration had reached him personally, and, second, the investigation a year ago had given Mr. Roy "a clean slate."¹⁴⁶

"The liveliest session of the board that has been held in many years," as one newspaper described the meeting,¹⁴⁷ ended on an amicable note. Superintendent Harris moved that as "a slight recognition of this important service to Louisiana" [Roy's almost forty years of educational work], his salary be continued to September 1, 1929. The Board unanimously approved Harris's recommendation. Mr. Roy then thanked the board for their support and cooperation during his administration and expressed his devotion to the State Normal and his continuing interest in Louisiana education. He hoped still to be able to serve public education in some capacity and pledged his support and aid to his successor. The board then proceeded immediately to elect a new president of the college.¹⁴⁸ V.L. Roy's forced resignation would probably not have received as much publicity as it did, except that it was included in the impeachment charges against Governor Long in April 1929. Once that happened, testimony was taken from Roy, Burke, Sholars, and others who were involved in the incident. State newspapers, especially anti-Long ones, carried verbatim accounts of the testimony presented in the impeachment proceedings.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶Official Proceedings of State Board, February 27, 1929, 8-9.

¹⁴⁷The Shreveport Times, February 28, 1929.

¹⁴⁸Official Proceedings of State Board, February 27, 1929, 11.

¹⁴⁹The Shreveport Times, April 11, 12, 1929.

From available accounts and sworn statements, there was little doubt Governor Long acted improperly in forcing V.L. Roy to resign. As the leading biographer of Long stated, "He was determined that the presidents [of state educational institutions] should not be anti-Long men and preferably should be Long adherents."¹⁵⁰ Roy's anti-Long stance, and not inefficiency or wrongdoing, was the reason for his removal. The State Board of Education, being fully under the control of the governor, could offer the heads of institutions no protection as one college president was to learn when he opposed Long's interference in his institution. The president protested, "The State Board of Education is my boss." To which, Huey Long replied, "Who the hell do you think is the boss of the State Board of Education?"¹⁵¹

Despite Victor L. Roy's controversial years at the State Normal College and his abrupt removal, his eighteen-year administration had been successful. By raising admission standards and revising curricula, he brought the school's academics up to a college level. With its name change, new four-year curricula, and approval by national accrediting associations, the State Normal College had become one of the noted teachers colleges in the nation and the best in Louisiana. The new concrete and brick buildings that dotted the campus added glamour to a thriving institution. However, the lifeblood of the State Normal College was its student body which grew in numbers and academic standing during the Roy years. Undoubtedly, President Roy was too concerned with protecting his students from all harm by strict regulations and discipline. He was also too conservative to allow the new trends and fads of the "Roaring Twenties" to taint his students. Even though the college regulations maintained an almost convent-like veil around the Normal students, changes permeated Roy's protective atmosphere and the Normalites developed a happy college life. They became intensely involved in extracurricular activities such as clubs and organizations and enjoyed such novelties as movies and the radio. New fashions and fads, despite President Roy's opposition, did reach them. And, certainly, school spirit was at an all-time high among the Normal students. Recognizing that much of the progress of the Normal was due to the dedicated work of President Roy, the students cheered him at the first assembly following his resignation and later presented him a livingroom suite as a going-away present. At the spring commencement, Professor George W. Williamson gave the retiring president a gold watch from the faculty.¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰T. Harry Williams, *Huey Long* (New York, 1969), 524.

¹⁵¹*Ibid.*, 524-25. Clifford Mitchell, "Growth of State Control of Public Education in Louisiana (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1942), 417-18.

¹⁵²*The Shreveport Times*, March 1, 1929; *The Natchitoches Enterprise*, June 6, 1929, June 13, 1929; *Current Sauce*, March 7, 1929, June 5, 1929; *The Natchitoches Times*, March 8, 1929. After resigning from the presidency of the State Normal College, Mr. Roy briefly entered the life insurance business. He then returned to the educational field where he served as business manager and secretary to the faculty at Louisiana State University, assistant state director of the National Youth Administration for Louisiana and in the United States Office of Education. He retired from active educational service in 1936 and died September 7, 1968 at age 97. In 1940 the State Board of Education had honored him by naming him president emeritus of the Louisiana State Normal College. *The Natchitoches Times*, July 5, 1929; Cline, *Pioneer Leaders and Early Institutions*, 182-3; Douglas, "Roy," 30.

The students who cheered President Roy upon learning of his resignation represented every part of Louisiana as well as several other states. Beginning with 1,901 students in 1911, the enrollment jumped to 3,546 in the last year of Roy's administration.¹⁵³ The increase was not always steady year by year but, rather, reflected highs and lows which were determined by local and national influences. For a few years beginning in 1913 higher academic standards caused the enrollment to remain static or decrease slightly. With young men entering military service and young women replacing them in civilian jobs, the number of students dropped notably during the World War I years.¹⁵⁴ One factor, however, always remained constant — women significantly outnumbered men. By 1928 women accounted for 2,742 students and men 804 in the total enrollment of 3,546.¹⁵⁵ Not only were there more Normal students as the Roy years progressed, but also they demonstrated greater maturity, independence, awareness, and variety of interests. Their maturity was due, at least in part, to higher academic entrance requirements, their independence and awareness to national and worldwide events such as the war and women's suffrage movement, and their diversity of interests to a combination of their maturity, independence, and awareness.

Upon entering the Normal, most of the women students and some of the men, after the first men's housing became available in 1911, lived in the Normal club. The club was, as it has been from the beginning, a boarding and dormitory department separate from the general operation of the school. The Normal president still served as president of the club and generally controlled its management and discipline. A dean of women assisted him in supervising the young women and a proctor, who was a member of the faculty, in managing the young men. By 1928 there were club accommodations for nine hundred women and 160 men in ten campus dormitories. Each of the eight women's dormitories was in charge of a matron, who was a faculty member living in the club, to whom the students were to yield "strict obedience." On the other hand, the proctor supervised two men's dormitories but was assisted by a three-man elected student committee. The men's club eventually became self-governing with regulations adopted by the members themselves and violators handled by a student committee. All club bedrooms were furnished with single beds, mattresses, chairs, table, dresser, closets (originally wardrobes), washstand or lavatory, steam heat and electric light. Students provided their own pillows, sheets, blankets, bedspreads, towels, and napkins. Club members were required to make their beds and keep their rooms neat and clean with periodic

¹⁵³*Fourteenth Biennial Report, 1912, 5; Twenty-third Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Normal College, Natchitoches, Louisiana. The State Teachers College of Louisiana, 1930. Normal Quarterly of the Louisiana State Normal College, XIX (April 1930), 8; cited hereafter as Twenty-third Biennial Report, 1930.*

¹⁵⁴*Fifteenth Biennial Report, 1914, 11-12; V.L. Roy to J.W. Bateman, October 9, 1920, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; Minutes of A Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Administrators State Normal School Natchitoches, La., May 27, 1918, Minutes, Board of Administrators, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; Minutes, Board of Administrators, May 26, 1919, *ibid.**

¹⁵⁵*Twenty-third Biennial Report, 1930, 8.*

inspections by the president and appropriate matron. Daily janitorial service was provided by the club.¹⁵⁶ For room and board, laundry, fees, and books a student paid fifty-five dollars for a term of twelve weeks in 1912. By 1929 the cost had risen to \$84.25 per term mainly because of rising food costs.¹⁵⁷

Even with moderate room and board charges and free tuition for those planning to teach in Louisiana's public schools, the cost of attending the State Normal College was prohibitive for many young people from rural farm families of moderate means during the Roy years. In 1924, for example, the median annual parental income of male students at the Normal was two thousand dollars while that of women students was \$2,625. At the same time, 359 of 843 students came from farm communities, another 256 from villages under twenty-five hundred population, and only forty-one from cities with a population of ten thousand or over.¹⁵⁸ To aid its needy students, the college offered working scholarships. Restricted to students already enrolled at the Normal, the scholarships were awarded on the basis of "need, merits, diligence as a student, and faithfulness and efficiency in service." Students whose parents were able to pay their expenses were not considered. The thirty or forty working scholarships required service in the library, bookstore, registrar's office, dairy, dining hall, Y.W.C.A., fruit shop, or on the grounds. The pay for student work increased from twenty cents an hour in 1919 to thirty to forty cents in 1929.¹⁵⁹ On the purely academic side, the Normal presented a scholarship to a member of the upper quartile of the graduating class of every approved Louisiana high school. The scholarships had to be awarded publicly at the high school's commencement and exempted the recipient from all fees during the two-year Normal course. The high school scholarships were discontinued at the end of the 1925-26 school year but the parish scholarships begun in 1904 continued to be awarded.¹⁶⁰ The Alumni Association also continued to help deserving students.

¹⁵⁶*Normal Quarterly*, 1928, 67-69.

¹⁵⁷*The Normal Quarterly of the Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, Louisiana. Announcements for Twenty-seventh year, 1912-1913*, 1 (July 1, 1912), 20; cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly*, 1912; *Normal Quarterly*, 1929, 66. The rise in room and board charges was due to increasing food prices. For example, in 1920 President Roy asked the Board of Administrators to raise the price of board stating that flour had gone up from \$12.00 to \$14.85 a barrel, potatoes from five cents to nearly ten cents a pound and sugar from sixteen cents to twenty-four cents a pound. He also noted an increase in the wages of kitchen and dining room workers. V.L. Roy to Governor R.G. Pleasant *et al.*, April 23, 1920, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U. The next year, however, when food prices declined, the cost of board was reduced. Minutes, Board of Administrators, June 22, 1921, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U. The Normal authorities also helped students when their families were faced with economic adversity. For example, in 1914 when Louisiana cotton farmers were suffering from high yield and loss of the European market, the State Normal School fell in line with the state's "Buy-A-Bale" movement by accepting cotton at ten cents a pound in payment for students' expenses. *The Natchitoches Enterprise*, September 24, 1914, supplement. For a comprehensive study of this movement in Louisiana, see James L. McCorkle, Jr., "The Louisiana 'Buy-A-Bale' of Cotton Movement, 1914," *Louisiana History*, XV (Spring, 1974), 133-52.

¹⁵⁸*Survey Commission Report*, 51-52.

¹⁵⁹*Normal Quarterly*, 1919, 41; *ibid.*, 1929, 99.

¹⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 1921, 37; *ibid.*, 1925, 85; V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, June 9, 1924, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; V.L. Roy to Mr. Van Sant, February 9, 1925, *ibid.*; *Normal Quarterly*, 1929, 99.

Although it dropped the Alby L. Smith scholarship in 1913, the Alumni Association had established an Alby L. Smith loan fund in 1910 to provide temporary aid to students in the last three terms of the Normal course. The recipient was to repay the loan at 6 percent interest during his/her first year's employment. After the installation of the four-year professional course, alumni loans were granted to students in the second year of the normal course or the third and fourth years of the professional course. By 1928 the interest had been reduced to 5 percent.¹⁶¹ In the 1920s the Normal also provided two working scholarships each to the children of naval and army personnel.¹⁶²

In addition to the college-sponsored scholarships, several benevolent organizations, including the Louisiana Federation of Women's Clubs, the Hypatia Club of Shreveport, and the United Daughters of the Confederacy, maintained scholarship funds which provided loans to deserving students. These loans carried no interest charges but the recipients were expected to repay them.¹⁶³ Individuals also aided Normal students financially. To assist needy Rapides parish students, J.W. Bolton, president of the Rapides Parish School Board, established a loan fund. The beneficiaries paid no interest on the loan but promised to teach nine months in the parish's public schools and pledged not to marry during that time.¹⁶⁴

Club life was rigidly regulated and discipline strict during the Roy years. Although admitting in 1914 that the rules governing a large group of young men and women had to be more stringent than those imposed at home, the school's administration inconsistently declared that "arbitrary regulations and iron-clad discipline should not be required" of those training "for the dignified profession of teaching." Students were allowed "all reasonable freedom" but not "license." To ensure that the students understood the virtues the Normal College fostered and conversely those traits it abhorred, the catalogs of the 1920s stated:

Industrious habits, diligence in study, promptness, neatness, honesty, ambition, and good morals are the virtues that the College expects and demands of all its students. Indolent, shiftless, or frivolous young people should not apply for admission. There is no place in the student body for untruthful or dishonest members or for students habitually negligent in the discharge of their duties.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶¹*The Normal Quarterly of the Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La. Annual Catalog. Announcements for Thirty-Second Year, 1916-1917*, V (April 1916), 43; cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly*, 1916; *ibid.*, 1928, 97-98.

¹⁶²Edwin Denby to V.L. Roy, January 22, 1923, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; V.L. Roy to Edwin Denby, January 15, 1923, *ibid.*

¹⁶³*Normal Quarterly*, 1916, 44; *ibid.*, 1929, 98.

¹⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 1919, 42.

¹⁶⁵*Normal Quarterly*, 1914-1915, 40-41; *Normal Quarterly*, 1921, 58; *Normal Quarterly*, 1929, 58.

Personally, President Roy felt that the Normal's discipline was "... very largely directed towards counteracting the loose tendencies of these reckless, post-bellum days. . . ."¹⁶⁶ Clearly, the "Flapper" age had made an entrance on the Normal campus.

Of particular concern to the school's administrators were the young women's dress and spending money habits. From a simple statement that, "It is harmful for students to have too much spending money, and simplicity in dress is desirable" in the catalog of 1911-1912, the emphasis on proper attire became so pronounced that the catalog of 1929 declared, "*Simplicity in dress is insisted upon, and modesty of attire is demanded of all young women of the school.*" Parents were urged to have their daughters' clothing made at home and to forbid them to alter their dresses "to conform with extravagant and extreme fashions." The young women were also encouraged to deposit their money in the club upon arriving and were forbidden to keep more than fifty cents in their rooms.¹⁶⁷ President Roy fanatically enforced the dress code by looking at the length of the girls' skirts before they left campus. Some of the young ladies, however, knew how to pass the president's inspection and still be fashionable. As one Normalite of the early twenties remembered it: "Short dresses were just then hitting the Deep South, and some of the more affluent girls had new suits with the shorter hem lines. They managed to lower them to a respectable length until they passed by Mr. Roy's eagle eye; as soon as they cleared the gates, up they came."¹⁶⁸ Others were not so fortunate and their parents received letters notifying them of their daughters' indiscretions. To one father President Roy wrote concerning his daughter, "I have found fault with her on more than one occasion, both on account of the low neck dresses she has worn and the shortness of her skirts."¹⁶⁹

President Roy was also adamantly opposed to the fashion of girls bobbing their hair. He prohibited the practice among the Normal girls and ordered them to put up their hair when observing or practice teaching. But, in this instance, President Roy was overwhelmed by students who cut their hair in spite of his wishes. One Normalite remembered, "It was the year that I approached my sixth term (of three months), that I ran afoul of the Bobbed Hair Rule! We had heard that one would be 'shipped' if she cut her hair, but no one had ever been so summarily dealt

¹⁶⁶V.L. Roy to Senator Delos R. Johnson, January 3, 1922, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U. For a survey of the manners, morals, and fashions which Roy opposed in the 1920s see Frederick Lewis Allen, *Only Yesterday* (New York, 1931) and Preston W. Slosson, *The Great Crusade and After* (New York, 1930).

¹⁶⁷*Session, 1911-1912, Louisiana State Normal School, Natchitoches, La., May 29, 1911-May 24, 1912* (New Orleans, n.d.), 43; cited hereafter as *Session, 1911-1912, Louisiana State Normal School; Normal Quarterly, 1929*, 68.

¹⁶⁸Ruth Vernon Pierce, *Memoirs of Days at State Normal, 1920*, Pierce Collection, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana; cited hereafter as *Pierce Memoirs, Pierce Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.*

¹⁶⁹Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

with, and although we were in almost mortal fear of Mr. Roy, we had our doubts that he would send a girl home for that." While home for the Christmas holiday, she cut her hair and was not permitted to practice teach the spring term. She did do her practice teaching the following term and later wrote, "Incidentally, my hair had not grown out sufficiently to 'put up' so my friends rolled it up for me each night to make it curl a little and fluff up enough so that I could wear a hair net over it, and seem grown-up! I was graduated with short hair. . . ."¹⁷⁰ By September 1923 President Roy was ready to give up the fight against bobbed hair. He then wrote Superintendent Harris, "This fall we find that the large majority of high school graduates that have entered Normal have bobbed hair, and I think it would be safe to say that two-thirds of our girls wear their hair short. Now is there any sense in opposing what seems to be a pretty well-established custom among the girls and women of the country? I would very much appreciate a word of advice from you on this subject."¹⁷¹ A few days later, Superintendent Harris responded, "From all I see as I travel over the country, I think we shall waste time and spend nervous energy uselessly to hold out against the style of bobbed hair. The young women of the state and country seem to prefer to wear their hair in that style. I suggest that we permit them to do so without any further protest."¹⁷²

President Roy accepted reluctantly other fashions and fads of the "Roaring Twenties." Although he did not feel that young ladies should hide their natural beauty with cosmetics, the Normal girls disagreed and used make-up to enhance their attractiveness.¹⁷³ The Normal president also opposed the "Flapper" custom of girls rolling their stockings below the knees. A faculty member recounted, "I happened to be in the Administrative Building and Mr. Roy called me into his office. He said, 'You know, I've noticed a strange custom among the girls on the campus. They are rolling their stockings and I can see their knees when they walk down the halls. What are you doing in your department about this?' Before I could answer, he lifted my skirt and my stockings were rolled! Whereupon we both laughed, and that was the end of that."¹⁷⁴

Mr. Roy also gave in on another item that he had banned from the Normal campus. For twelve years he had denied the requests of the Coca Cola people to allow their beverage on campus. Finally, the company sent their chemist from St. Louis to convince him that Coca Cola was not as harmful as coffee if drunk in moderation. At that point, the Normal president agreed to make a test by furnishing a few cases of Coke to one of the dormitories and watching the effects.¹⁷⁵ Thus young

¹⁷⁰Pierce Memoirs, Pierce Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁷¹V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, September 21, 1923, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *The Natchitoches Times*, July 11, 1924.

¹⁷²T.H. Harris to V.L. Roy, September 24, 1923, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁷³*The Natchitoches Times*, July 24, 1925.

¹⁷⁴Thelma Kyser quoted in Rhodes, "Old Normal," 23.

¹⁷⁵V.L. Roy to Mrs. [Ethel L.] Hereford, June 16, 1925, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

Americans' most popular beverage made its entrance at the Louisiana State Normal College.

Other club regulations were clearly stated in the school's annual catalogs. For example, the 1922 catalog listed fourteen club rules. Upon arriving in Natchitoches, all students had to go directly to the college where they were assigned rooms. They could not stay overnight in town either then or when leaving the Normal to return to their homes. Girls were not allowed to spend a night away from the club under any circumstances. Students were permitted to visit home only once per quarter and to go to town on Saturday mornings to shop. No club member was to leave the campus without obtaining permission and reporting to the dean or proctor both on leaving and returning. Young women were not allowed to receive calls from gentlemen or long distance telephone calls unless they were from home. Club members were not allowed to leave their dormitories after study bell without permission and all had to attend day church services in town on Sundays. Medicines, food, and matches were not to be kept in rooms while narcotic, intoxicant, and poisonous substances were absolutely banned.¹⁷⁶ By 1929, President Roy's last year, a few of the regulations had been liberalized, but ever so slightly. By then students were permitted to visit home in emergencies and at Thanksgiving, Easter, and the Christmas holidays. The ban on young women receiving calls from men was also dropped. Freshmen and sophomores could still shop in town only once a week but there were no restrictions on upperclassmen. In 1925 President Roy had considered reinstating stricter limits on town visits when he noticed about twenty-five girls at the town movies. "I do not think the time should be so extended that it is possible for them to go and spend one and three quarters hours at the movies."¹⁷⁷

The penalties for violating club rules did not change between 1922 and 1929. For a minor violation a student was put "under arrest" which meant forfeiture of privileges for a time. "For any grave violation of rules or of propriety, for continuous neglect of duty, or unbecoming conduct" the penalty was suspension or dismissal.¹⁷⁸ President Roy definitely felt that certain misconduct warranted dismissal. On several occasions, he wrote fathers informing them that their daughters had been dismissed for "joy riding" with young men in automobiles.¹⁷⁹ Another time he suspended the daughter of one of the school's Board of Administrators for taking a club girl in an automobile to a mask dance in town. Needless to say, President Roy endured the unending hostility of that board member.¹⁸⁰ The outraged board member should have received some consolation from realizing that Presi-

¹⁷⁶*The Normal Quarterly of the State Normal College, Natchitoches, Louisiana, Catalog, 1922. Announcements for Thirty-eighth Year. Roster of Students and Graduates for 1921, XI (April 1922), 45; cited hereafter as Normal Quarterly, 1922.*

¹⁷⁷*Normal Quarterly, 1929, 69-70; V.L. Roy to Mrs. [Ethel L.] Hereford, January 3, 1925, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.*

¹⁷⁸*Normal Quarterly, 1922, 45; Normal Quarterly, 1929, 70.*

¹⁷⁹Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁸⁰*Ibid.*

dent Roy's stern discipline applied equally to all students including his own children. Reuben Sanford Roy, the president's son, was also dismissed from the Normal. As he remembered, "I was shipped because I picked up a carload of girls at the college entrance and gave them a lift to town. That night at the dinner table my father folded his arms on the chair and said, 'When it comes home, it's hard.' I had to go to school at L.S.U. There were no exceptions."¹⁸¹ On another occasion President Roy refused to let a young man return to the Normal for the next quarter, explaining, "I . . . did my best to prevail on him to abandon his idleness, cutting of classes, loafing and loitering. I appealed to him in every way that I knew how; I threatened him with dismissal; I suspended him on one occasion; but all to no avail. The State Normal College cannot afford to carry timber that is as dead as that."¹⁸² However, in some instances the Normal president showed genuine concern for a student's reputation. Instead of dismissing one young lady summarily for leaving campus without permission and going to town unsupervised, he requested her mother withdraw her at the end of the quarter. Despite his taking extreme disciplinary action in some cases, President Roy felt that " . . . a relatively small number, and we believe a decreasing number of our people, are violating the proprieties of life."¹⁸³

Male students living in the club were also closely supervised especially in the early Roy years. After some indecision on whether to continue the men's club or not, in 1914, President Roy agreed to accept a list of club rules drawn up by the men themselves. The regulations were almost military in nature. Article one concerned the appearance and neatness of the men's rooms. Beds had to be made, tables and dressers in order, lockers' openings covered with curtains or doors, and clothing properly hung or stored. Every room was inspected each morning by the monitor. Article two concerned the use of toilet facilities and prohibited spitting on the floors of toilets, halls, rooms, and galleries. The third article, regulating personal behavior, included rules that boys had to be dressed going to and from the baths and could not "wash" their teeth over the bathtubs. Furthermore, no baths were to be taken in the evenings between 6:30 and 9:30. All were to avoid loud talking or unnecessary visiting during study hours, were forbidden to practice musical instruments in dormitories, and were to avoid slamming doors. The last articles forbade smoking, prohibited hazing, and admonished the men to be clean in dress at all times. They were not to loiter around the dining hall after meals and were to be in bed with lights out at ten o'clock. The Normal men were to wear coats and collars at meals and to conduct themselves "in the way becoming a gentleman."¹⁸⁴

¹⁸¹Quoted in Douglas, "Roy," 26. R.S. Roy graduated from L.S.U. in 1919 and received the M.D. degree from Tulane University in 1925.

¹⁸²V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, September 27, 1923, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁸³V.L. Roy to P.C. Authement, August 8, 1923, *ibid.*

¹⁸⁴Men's Club Rules, September 14, 1915, *ibid.*

Despite their close supervision in the dormitories, the men were given more off-campus privileges than women. They could go to Sam's fruit store between 5:00 and 7:30 p.m. and could swim in Chaplin's Lake between 6:30 and 8:00 in the evenings as long as they returned to campus by 8:00 p.m. Men students were also permitted to go to town on Wednesdays between four and six o'clock and on Saturdays between 3:00 and 6:00 p.m. These were times, naturally, when women were confined to campus. However, even male students could not go to town at night without the president's permission and, like women, they had to attend church services.¹⁸⁵ Problems arose in enforcing the numerous, and often unreasonable, men's regulations. Most of the trouble originated with graduates and teachers who occupied facilities with the undergraduates. Although they were granted special privileges, such as going to town anytime, the graduates and teachers had the worst kept rooms and often stayed up to 11:30 or midnight talking loudly and disturbing others. To control such misconduct, one housing authority suggested a system of demerits which could, when they became numerous enough, end in suspension.¹⁸⁶

Not even the Normal students boarding in town escaped the web of regulations governing their conduct. Boys and girls were not allowed to board in the same home and all club rules concerning study hours and social activities were to be observed. No women students could attend any social functions or have dates without first obtaining permission from the dean and submitting the names of her escort and chaperone. The girls were absolutely forbidden to go out after sunset or attend any social or entertainment function on week nights. Of course, they could not ride in automobiles with men or boys and were forbidden to attend dances under any circumstances. Violations of the rules were to be reported to the college authorities by the town lady managing the boarding house.¹⁸⁷ Evidently, violators were disciplined, for, on at least one occasion, President Roy dismissed a student boarding in town for riding in an automobile with a young man.¹⁸⁸

Despite the myriad regulations restricting student conduct, President Roy felt that the Normal provided ample opportunity for social contact between the sexes. With satisfaction, he pointed out the occasions on which young women could fraternize with young men. They could meet them in the hallways of the main building (Caldwell Hall), between classes, and at literary society meetings on Saturday evenings. The girls could also meet boys in town during their shopping visits but were not allowed to promenade with them on the streets although they could walk

¹⁸⁵Men's Club Rules, June 5, 1918, *ibid.*

¹⁸⁶J.L. Graybill to V.L. Roy, July 7, 1919, *ibid.*

¹⁸⁷A.A. Fredericks To Whom It May Concern, September 26, 1923, *ibid.*; A.A. Fredericks To Whom It May Concern, June 4, 1924, *ibid.*; *The Natchitoches Times*, June 17, 1921. In May, 1919 the Board of Administrators approved a ruling that all students who did not live in the city or within reasonable driving distance of it would have to live in the dormitories. This did not apply to in-service teachers and married persons. Minutes, Board of Administrators, May 26, 1919, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁸⁸Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

to and from church with young men. They were also permitted to attend Friday night movies or other entertainments with dates as well as lyceum events.¹⁸⁹ Even though the Normal grounds were enclosed by a fence with a bar across the front gate, young boys from town often came on campus to ride and yell in front of the girls' dormitories. This annoyed President Roy to the extent that he threatened to have them arrested and called on city authorities to help prevent such disturbances.¹⁹⁰

The girls' reaction to having boys on campus ranged from complete disinterest to euphoria. One Normalite wrote in 1911 when the first men's dormitory was being readied, "I haven't time to 'fool away' with such specimens of humanity as the male sex. They are no attraction for this broad-minded follower and imitator of Socrates." She opposed boys being in the club because she felt that the "... girls won't have as many limitations and we shall have to be so precise about everything."¹⁹¹ Many Normal girls, however, welcomed men to the Normal but lamented that there were not enough of them. One young woman reported that dates "... were practically nonexistent for the majority of us, since boys were as scarce as the proverbial hen's teeth; besides, many of us had a sweetheart back home or, as I did, at L.S.U. with whom we corresponded lengthily, and to whom were 'true'.¹⁹² Another Normalite felt that, "The only trouble about the boys here is that there are not enough to go around. The few that are here are already *mortgaged*, I am informed; so you see a poor freshie hasn't much of a chance." Yet she felt that the Normal boys were the "most wonderful of ball players" and heavenly musicians and obviously she enjoyed meeting them on her allowed weekly visit to town. With a sense of humor, she wrote "... there never were such *religious* boys in any place as here. They *never* miss a Sunday to go to church. They certainly are thoughtful too, for they remain outside and keep down the noise, so that the Normal girls may better understand the sermon."¹⁹³ Obviously, many Normal girls enjoyed having boys on the "Hill" and probably had more social contact with them than President Roy anticipated.

Nevertheless, the sexes were carefully segregated on the Normal campus by policy. Boys were not allowed to loiter talking or sitting with girls. Students who violated this rule had to spend their free periods in the president's office for three weeks. The library and dining hall had separate female and male entrances which

¹⁸⁹V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, March 15, 1923, *ibid.* Superintendent Harris felt that President Roy was allowing "... just about the right amount of social contact between the sexes at the Normal School. I think we all agree that the girls should not be completely isolated; and also do we agree that proper safeguards should be thrown up around them. This you seem to be doing." T.H. Harris to V.L. Roy, March 17, 1923, *ibid.*

¹⁹⁰V.L. Roy to J.E. Keegan, Sr., November 6, 1923; V.L. Roy to Mayor J.H. Keyser, October 20, 1924; V.L. Roy to Carl Henry, February 14, 1924, *ibid.*

¹⁹¹Willie Irene Gibbs to her mother [1911?], Sill Collection, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana.

¹⁹²Pierce Memoirs, Pierce Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁹³"A Freshie's Impression of the Normal Boys," October 21, 1915, *Potpourri*, 1916, 273-74.

applied to faculty as well as students. Meanwhile, on Saturdays the library was open to young men in the morning and young women in the afternoon.¹⁹⁴ In the way of recreation, dancing between boys and girls was not allowed but the girls could dance together in the afternoons although President Roy may have regretted this concession when the Charleston became popular. The girls also danced with each other every Friday night in the dining room.¹⁹⁵ Finding the Friday night dances boring, they decided in 1913 to have a gala affair, a Thanksgiving German. The Social Hall was festively decorated and some of the girls dressed as boys escorted others to the dance. "Therefore, although the gentlemen had very effeminate voices, and an overabundance of hair, they could 'guide' and were very gallant. So the feminine hearts were glad!" The boys enjoyed similar dances among themselves after the Saturday night society meetings.¹⁹⁶ There certainly must have been great joy on the "Hill" when the first all-college dance was held in 1929. "The dance was held in the Women's Gym, and it was decorated to the last degree. It was a huge success; so successful, that, following it, other dances through the year — and through the years — have taken place."¹⁹⁷

Boys and girls were allowed to go to Friday night movies together in Caldwell under the watchful eye of the college authorities. The weekly movies, the most popular recreation at the Normal, originated with Professor George Williamson who began by showing stereopticon slides. The presentations were so popular that the college soon obtained a modern motion picture projector. For ten cents, occasionally fifteen cents if the program was outstanding, the students were treated to two movies between seven and nine o'clock. Since the purpose was to instruct as well as entertain, the first film was either a travelogue or industrial film and the second a high-class drama or comedy.¹⁹⁸ A boy would meet his date at Social Hall and walk her to Caldwell Hall. The deans chaperoned the movies to prevent handholding and flipped the lights on and off to ensure proper student conduct. After the show, the young man escorted his date back to Social Hall often stopping to sit and converse with her in one of the booths erected for that purpose. Naturally, at an early hour the deans had the young ladies safely tucked away in their dormitories.

¹⁹⁴Rhodes, "Old Normal," 31; *The Natchitoches Times*, February 11, 1916.

¹⁹⁵Rhodes, "Old Normal," 31-32.

¹⁹⁶*Potpourri*, 1914; Social Hall was the old frame Model School Building which was relocated back of the new Training School in the vicinity of the president's home and the women's dormitories. The first floor contained a reception room where young women and faculty members could receive parents, out-of-town friends, and other guests. The students often relaxed there before evening study hall and organizations held meetings and social functions there. The Dean of Women's apartments were also on the first floor. Pierce Memoirs, Pierce Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *Normal Quarterly*, 1928, 70-71.

¹⁹⁷Miss Catherine Winters quoted in Rhodes, "Old Normal," 32.

¹⁹⁸*The Shreveport Times*, March 17, 1921. The radio was also introduced at the Normal during the early twenties by F.G. Fournet, professor of physics. He later taught a very popular course in radio. Pierce Memoirs, Pierce Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *The Natchitoches Enterprise*, September 21, 1922; *Current Sauce*, November 9, 1922.

Smoking and drinking were absolutely forbidden on campus and violators were punished by "shipping."¹⁹⁹

Although social activities were limited at the Normal, students were certainly not bored from inactivity. In the fall, winter, and spring terms the student's day began with breakfast at 8:00 a.m. (later changed to 7:30), followed by classes, lunch at 12:10 p.m. (later changed to 12:30 p.m.), more classes, and dinner at 5:00 p.m. During the summer term the schedule was modified with classes in the morning and laboratories and a rest period in the afternoon. Every student had to attend daily assembly and participate in assembly singing on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.²⁰⁰ A student could not take more than twenty-five hours or drop a course without the permission of the teacher, advisor, and president. The maximum load was later reduced to eighteen hours with a student taking from twelve to eighteen hours, depending upon the number of quality points earned the previous term. Any student not earning a minimum number of quality points was required to withdraw from the Normal for a period of time prescribed by the president.²⁰¹ Students were also limited in the number of extracurricular activities they could undertake. They could engage in no more than two major activities, such as editor of the *Potpourri* or *Current Sauce*, member of a varsity team, or class representative. Two minor activities, such as membership in college organizations and clubs or president of the student body, equaled one major activity.²⁰² Student activities were proliferating so rapidly at the Normal, as they were on other campuses in the 1920s, that the college authorities probably felt the need for some restrictions.

Among existing campus organizations, many of the pre-Roy-era groups remained active. The four early literary societies, Seekers After Knowledge, the Eclectic Literary Society, the Modern Culture Club, and Mortar Board continued to hold a special place in the minds and hearts of the Normalites. Although society credits were required for graduation, membership in a literary society represented more than just fulfilling an obligation. These organizations were sources of fierce pride and competition among the students and welded them into large "families" of caring people. In 1917 still another society, the Caspari Literary Society, was established for students in the lower terms. The next year, however, because war conditions brought lower enrollment, the new society was united with the Mortar Board. Finally, in 1919, it was recognized as a higher literary society and within a few years, Freshman Literary Societies were organized for freshmen students.²⁰³ By 1926 there were many students who commuted to the college daily. Since it was inconvenient for these students to attend the evening meetings of a regular literary

¹⁹⁹*The Shreveport Times*, May 3, 1959; Rhodes, "Old Normal," 33-34.

²⁰⁰*Session, 1911-1912, Louisiana State Normal School*, 43; *Normal Quarterly*, 1919, 44; *ibid.*, 1929, 68.

²⁰¹*Ibid.*, 1916, 42-43; *ibid.*, 1928, 61-63.

²⁰²*Ibid.*, 1918, 45-46.

²⁰³*Ibid.*, 31; *Potpourri*, 1921; *ibid.*, 1923, 202; *ibid.*, 1928.

society, a Commuters Club was established. Meeting in the daytime, the club provided commuters with training in public speaking, program preparation, and general stage presence. Participation in the Commuters Club counted for the literary credits required for graduation.²⁰⁴ The literary societies of the Roy years gave Normal students valuable practice in parliamentary law, debate, declamation, poetry, singing, and athletics. Nevertheless, as on college campuses throughout the nation, the literary societies were replaced gradually by fraternities and sororities.

Religious organizations also remained prominent in the life of the Normal students in the early decades of the twentieth century. Although several of the earlier ones went out of existence, the Y.W.C.A. and the Y.M.C.A. maintained their sponsorship of religious and charitable projects on campus as well as engaging in school war work. Both organizations contributed to the social life of the Normalites by hosting parties and receptions for students and faculty. The Catholic students replaced the Apostleship of Prayer in the fall of 1925 with the Newman Club, a national organization of Catholic men and women at nonsectarian schools and colleges. Its purpose was to uplift the religious life of the students and foster a spirit of fellowship among them. Since it was a national organization, the Newman Club developed broad interests and intercollegiate affiliations among the participating students.²⁰⁵ One year later, in the summer of 1926, the Baptist Student Union was reorganized "to make Christ the Leader of the Baptist students on the campus. . . ."²⁰⁶ With the Newman Club and the Baptist Student Union, two of the largest denominations on campus had their own organizations, while the Y.W.C.A. and Y.M.C.A. cut across denominational lines in their appeal to students. Additionally, many students became involved with the local churches where they attended Sunday services. Certainly, the Normal students had ample opportunity for spiritual growth and development.

Music took on an expanded role at the State Normal College during the Roy era. In 1915 the Normal Band, because of its outstanding reputation, received the honor of being asked to play at the State Fair in Shreveport. President Roy and Bandmaster H.W. Stopher immediately accepted the offer, charging six hundred dollars plus train fare for the appearance. About thirty band boys made the trip to Shreveport and, while there, lived in four small tents covered by a larger tent on the fairgrounds. To make sure the boys had proper food, President Roy sent a school cook and waiter along with them. Next, he arranged for a train to take five hundred Normal students to the State Fair on School and College Day to see the band march and the Louisiana State Normal-Louisiana Industrial Institute foot-

²⁰⁴Ibid.

²⁰⁵Ibid., 1919, 111; *ibid.*, 1926; *ibid.*, 1928; *Normal Quarterly*, 1916, 46-47; *ibid.*, 1926, 96.

²⁰⁶*Potpourri*, 1927; *ibid.*, 1928.

ball game. The Normal Band also gave concerts and participated in other school activities throughout the year.²⁰⁷ The Normal Orchestra was a voluntary group of music students, a dozen or more in 1912, who provided music at assemblies and other college functions.²⁰⁸ For those students who enjoyed music of a lighter variety, a Mandolin and Guitar Club was organized in the fall of 1911 by R.W. Winstead. The club was open to any student, whether enrolled in the School of Music or not, and provided musical entertainment at school activities.²⁰⁹ For those who preferred singing and had the necessary ability, Browne Martin, director of the School of Music, established the Choral Society in 1912. The Choral Society appeared on musical programs, in festivals and pageants, and presented one cantata yearly. There was also a Glee Club which participated in campus programs and entertainments.²¹⁰ Undoubtedly, the number and success of musical organizations were due largely to the outstanding School of Music which the Normal had developed.

Among the new organizations, the most notable, at least in numbers, were the department clubs. Students dedicated to the study of a particular discipline soon found others with similar interests and under the auspices of an academic department, they formed a club. Among those established at the Normal during the early Roy years were: the Contemporary Life Club, Le Cercle Francais, the Latin Club, and the Rural Life Club. The Contemporary Life Club, organized in 1913, was one of the most active of the early student clubs. Designed to promote leadership qualities and civic awareness among social science students, the club discussed contemporary social, economic, and political issues at its meetings. More importantly, the Contemporary Life Club began publishing a school newspaper, the *Current Sauce*, in 1914. Only a six-page biweekly in the beginning, the *Current Sauce's* purpose was " . . . to reflect every phase of the student's life. It must give the news and at the same time furnish an outlet for the expression of the best thought of the student body."²¹¹ The early school newspaper included coverage of world, national, state, local, and campus events, poems, humor, and other student contributions, editorials, and advertisements. Subscription rates together with advertisement fees and, perhaps, funding from the Contemporary Life Club, supported the newspaper. The subscription rates which were twenty cents per term and fifty cents per

²⁰⁷H.W. Stopher to Louis N. Brueggerhoff, June 7, 1915, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; V.L. Roy to L.N. Brueggerhoff, October 8, 1915, *ibid.*; V.L. Roy to John Kauffman, October 20, 1915, *ibid.* The band was discontinued from 1917 to 1931. *Northwestern State University Alumni Columns* (Winter, 1983).

²⁰⁸*Normal Quarterly*, 1912, 28; *ibid.*, 1928, 95.

²⁰⁹*ibid.*, 1912, 28; *ibid.*, 1928, 95.

²¹⁰*Potpourri*, 1913, 120; *Normal Quarterly*, 1928, 95-96.

²¹¹*Potpourri*, 1915; *Normal Quarterly*, 1914-1915, 48.



Contemporary Life Club

year in 1914 rose to twenty-five cents and seventy-five cents in 1915. The Contemporary Life Club continued publishing the *Current Sauce* until it became the official organ of the student body in 1918.²¹² Le Cercle Francais, also founded in 1913, was a literary society in which no English was spoken. Open to all students of French, the club was dedicated to the preservation and promotion of the French language.²¹³ Taking their cue from the two older clubs, students of Latin, under the direction of Professor R.N. Winstead, established the Latin Club in 1914 to supplement the work of the Latin Department. One of the most active student organizations, the Latin Club, in addition to its regular meetings, published a Latin paper, *Vox Discipulorum*, presented Latin plays in public, and hosted a Latin social at which the guests wore Roman togas and enjoyed Latin games and contests. For a brief time during World War I the club disbanded to allow its members to do additional war work and turned its money over to the Y.W.C.A. and the Red Cross for war projects. In 1919, with the war emergency ended, the Latin Club resumed its normal activities.²¹⁴ The Rural Life Club was composed of students

²¹²Bessie L. Brock, "History of the *Current Sauce*: You've Come A Long Way." Copy of student paper in possession of author.

²¹³*Normal Quarterly*, 1914-1915, 47.

²¹⁴*Potpourri*, 1915; *ibid.*, 1919, 130.

majoring either in rural education or agriculture. Devoted to developing a general interest in and knowledge of rural life, the members studied conditions and problems of rural living, enjoyed demonstrations of rural education, and analyzed surveys of rural communities. By 1929 the Rural Life Club was replaced by an Agricultural Club which concentrated on the study of current agricultural problems, including experiment stations and farm legislation.²¹⁵

In the 1920s additional department clubs were established as students developed interests in some of the newer curricula being offered by the Normal. Among the twenties clubs were: the Dramatic Club, Euthenics Club, Spanish Club, English Club, and Science Club. The Dramatic Club, organized in 1923 by Frances Davis, assistant professor of English and Dramatic Art, staged at least one play every term for the enjoyment of the students and general public. The more successful productions were later taken on the road to other Louisiana cities for performances. The Dramatic Club also produced each year three original plays written by students and entered in the Lesche annual playwriting contest. So successful were the productions of the Dramatic Club, that its members, admitted only after talent tryouts, became known as the "Davis Players."²¹⁶ Girls majoring in home economics organized the Euthenics Club in 1926 to promote a professional spirit, develop sociability, and foster culture among its members. Additionally, the local club was affiliated with the National Home Economics Association.²¹⁷

By the end of President Roy's administration, 1929, three additional clubs had been established: a Science Club for those interested in science and mathematics, a Spanish Club, and an English Club. The Science Club introduced students to industrial applications of mathematics and science while the Spanish Club presented the customs and traditions of Spaniards and emphasized the speaking of Spanish. The English Club focused on the study of English literature as reflective of past tendencies and movements.²¹⁸ The excellent work of the department clubs was recognized by the college authorities when they required two credits in club work as well as three literary society credits for all four-year students. Two-year students were given the option of either two credits in a literary society or two credits in a department club.²¹⁹

²¹⁵*Normal Quarterly*, 1925, 79; *ibid.*, 1929, 91; *Potpourri*, 1928.

²¹⁶*Normal Quarterly*, 1925, 79; *Potpourri*, 1928.

²¹⁷*Ibid.*; *Normal Quarterly*, 1927, 99. The study of home economics received a boost in 1925 when the Practice Cottage was erected at a cost of \$12,000. The one-story brick building contained ten rooms where the home economics students were required to live one term. *Normal Quarterly*, 1929, 72, 77.

²¹⁸*Ibid.*, 1925, 79-80; *Potpourri*, 1928.

²¹⁹*Normal Quarterly*, 1928, 91.



Purple Jacket Club

In addition to department clubs, there were other campus groups which acted more in the nature of service organizations. In the 1920s a fire brigade was established among the boys at the Normal to increase fire protection on the campus which still had wooden buildings. The brigade had some three thousand dollars in equipment including four hose carts equipped with twenty-four hundred feet of

hose, four ladders, personal equipment for thirty men, and a life net. The boys attended classes in fire brigade for which they were given credit in physical education. They were also responsible for checking the sixty-five fire extinguishers placed about the campus buildings.²²⁰ To disseminate news of the Normal to Louisiana's weekly newspapers, a Normal Booster Club was established in 1926. The next year, when its name was changed to the Normal Press Association, it had members from almost every parish in Louisiana who wrote news articles for their local papers.²²¹ In 1926, under the supervision of President Roy himself, the Purple Jacket Club, the most important of the Normal's service organizations, was established. The Purple Jacket Club was limited to fifteen or sixteen members nominated by the members themselves and selected by a committee of President Roy, the dean of women, and several faculty members. The club members in their purple jackets assisted at special occasions including freshman days, graduation, lyceums, rallies, and other events.²²² The Purple Jackets soon gained a position of respect, trust, and leadership on campus and inclusion in their ranks became a much sought-after honor.

As the Normal enrollment increased, student activities proliferated, and the independence of the "Roaring Twenties" appeared on campus, it was natural that the students requested some voice in the affairs of the college. Their appeal was met in 1925 when the Student Association was established. The membership of the association was the entire student body while the officers consisted of a president, vice-president, and secretary-treasurer. A legislative assembly, composed of the three officers and two representatives from each class, had "the power to legislate in all matters of general student activities, interests and discipline, provided all laws, rules and regulations before becoming effective shall have received the approval or sanction of the Committee of Thirteen." The Committee of Thirteen consisted of six students representing various organizations, six faculty members, and the president of the college. The constitution of the Student Association also provided for an Honor Council with the duty "to try all cases of infraction of laws, rules, and regulations passed by the Legislative Assembly. The Council may also try cases of dishonesty and cheating which shall be reported."²²³ The Student Association's honor council was in addition to an already existing honor system which had been established in 1914. According to the Normal catalogs, its chief purpose was "to exert a moral force directed toward scrupulous honesty in all scholastic work." The older honor system was governed by a board consisting of a representative elected by each class with the representative of the graduating class acting as chairman. The sessions of the board were executive and its decisions sub-

²²⁰ *Potpourri*, 1926.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, 1928.

²²² *Ibid.*, 1929.

²²³ *State Normal College, Natchitoches, Louisiana. The Student Handbook, September 1925*. Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; Pettis, "Development of State Normal College," 33.

ject to approval by the president of the college.²²⁴ Evidently, the governing board of the honor system handled cases of dishonesty in academic affairs while the Student Association's Honor Council concerned itself with violations of regulations passed by the Legislative Assembly. Although the Student Association was not listed in the catalogs during the Roy years, it provided a means for student involvement in college affairs and discipline and provided a medium for interaction between administration, faculty, and students.

For those students who were interested, fraternities and sororities made their appearance on the Normal campus during the twenties. The 1929 college catalog listed three active fraternities: Lambda Zeta, Sigma Delta Gamma, and Alpha Phi Gamma, a national honorary journalistic fraternity. That year, Sigma Tau Gamma also established a chapter at the Normal. Although no houses were available for the fraternal organizations, campus facilities were provided for their meetings. The Normal also had chapters of four national educational sororities: Delta Sigma Epsilon, Sigma Sigma Sigma, Theta Sigma Upsilon, and Pi Kappa Sigma. There was also one local sorority, Sigma Alpha. Each organization had a faculty advisor while a faculty committee of three advised all fraternities and sororities in general.²²⁵ In 1928, a Panhellenic Association of all sororities was established to regulate the general work of the sisterhoods and to encourage cooperation in solving problems.²²⁶ Following a national trend, fraternities and sororities became a permanent and integral part of the social life of the Normal within a few years and gradually replaced the literary societies.

Athletics in the period 1911-1929 gained a tremendous popularity at the Normal. Men's varsity football and basketball games attracted student and town fans. Although the Normal teams suffered from a lack of equipment and too few boys to play, they had an outstanding coach, H. Lee Prather, who developed excellence and integrity in sports. When Coach Prather became head of the department of physical education in 1913, the football equipment of the Normal consisted of "... 13 pair of plow shoes with cleats nailed on them by a local shoe cobbler, 13 pairs of nondescript trousers, and 13 pairs of cotton jerseys. There was not a single head guard in the equipment, nor were there any shoulder or knee pads."²²⁷ During his first six years, Coach Prather did not have enough boys to form two football teams so he had to divide his squad for scrimmage. Furthermore, during the early years

²²⁴*Normal Quarterly*, 1919, 43; *ibid.*, 1928, 58; Pettis, "Development of State Normal College," 33.

²²⁵*Normal Quarterly*, 1929, 93; *Potpourri*, 1927; *ibid.*, 1928; *ibid.*, 1929. The 1927 *Potpourri* also includes Sigma Delta Tau fraternity. For a delightful account of the installation of Phi Chapter of Delta Sigma Epsilon see Genevieve Kleinknecht-Gregg, "Installation of Phi Chapter," *The Shield of Delta Sigma Epsilon*, X (May 1926), 16-18.

²²⁶*Potpourri*, 1929.

²²⁷"Story of Athletics in State Traced by Prather in Talk," [August 23, 1929] newspaper clipping in Melrose Scrapbook #69, 30. Melrose Collection, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana; cited hereafter as Prather, "Athletics In State."

there were no rules of eligibility except at Louisiana State University and Tulane. A college could use any player "that happened to be handy at game time" and any instructor could decide whether a player who was doing poorly academically took part in a game or not. With such handicaps, it is not surprising Coach Prather admitted "the outcome of athletic contests at the teachers college had not been phenomenal," yet he felt the Normal team always put up a good showing despite the low enrollment of men.²²⁸ Actually the men's basketball team had an excellent record against other state teams. For example, they gained the Louisiana Intercollegiate Athletic Association's championship in 1922 by winning ten out of fifteen games.²²⁹

The establishment of the L.I.A.A. demonstrated the growing interest in athletics at Louisiana colleges. Formed about 1915, with Coach Prather as one of its founders, the L.I.A.A. began with three members: the Normal, Louisiana College, and Southwestern at Lafayette. It gradually expanded to include Centenary at Shreveport, Louisiana Tech at Ruston, and St. Charles at Grand Coteau. The Normal remained in the L.I.A.A. until 1927 when it joined the growing Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association.²³⁰ Despite his intense interest in sports, H. Lee Prather recognized the proper role of athletics at the Normal. He felt that the main function of the Normal was to train athletic coaches in all sports. For this reason, he refused to consider dropping spring sports, such as baseball and track, and felt that, instead of developing a quarterback, center, or guard, each player should be able to fill any position in order to be able to coach when he graduated.²³¹ President Roy agreed with Coach Prather's view of athletics and objected vigorously when he learned other state colleges were offering prospective student athletes "monitorships" which paid all their expenses but required little or no work in return. At one college the merchants of the town even bought most of the athletes' clothing. On the other hand, the practice at the Normal was to pay all scholarship students, including athletes, a fixed amount per hour of actual work. President Roy rightfully felt the Normal was at a disadvantage recruiting potential athletes and asked Superintendent Harris to investigate athletic practices at the several state colleges.²³² The superintendent fully agreed with President Roy, stating, "... I feel very strongly on this subject of clean athletics. I believe that there is much merit in physical education training if it is of the right kind; but when colleges place football and other athletics on a pedestal far above the other activities

²²⁸*Ibid.*

²²⁹*Potpourri*, 1922, 212.

²³⁰Prather, "Athletics In State."

²³¹*Ibid.*

²³²V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, April 21, 1923, Roy Papers, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; T.H. Harris to A.B. Dinwiddie, April 23, 1923, *ibid.*; V.L. Roy to A.B. Dinwiddie, April 25, 1923, *ibid.*

of the college, infinitely more harm than good is done the student body."²³³ He urged an investigation of college athletics at Louisiana's colleges and the next year the Survey Commission report concluded "... that athletics is occupying too large a place in the life of the schools and is not upon the highest level." It also stated, "Ruston has undoubtedly gone further in overemphasis and undesirable practices than have Lafayette and Natchitoches."²³⁴ Louisiana Tech was probably the college President Roy alluded to when he originally asked for the investigation.

While the Survey Commission criticized the overemphasis on sports at Louisiana colleges, it also recognized that athletics were instrumental in building collegiate spirit and loyalty. In recognition of the Normal's spirit and in order to encourage it further, in 1923 President Roy and Coach Prather decided the Normal teams deserved a mascot. After all, they were playing Tigers, Bulldogs, Greenies, Wolves, Wildcats, and Gentlemen, yet they had no mascot themselves. A contest was held among the students to select an appropriate mascot. They were to submit names with the winning suggestion earning the student a ten-dollar prize. A committee of three, President Roy, Dr. Jesse Hazzard, and Professor John E. Guardia, were to make the final selection, but the response was so great that the best they could do was settle on Braves or Demons. Both names were submitted to the student body whose final choice was Demons.²³⁵ The 1924 *Potpourri* portrayed for the first time the Normal "Demon" in a rather nondescript drawing.²³⁶ Henceforth, the Demons took to the field and court in search of honor and glory for Old Normal.

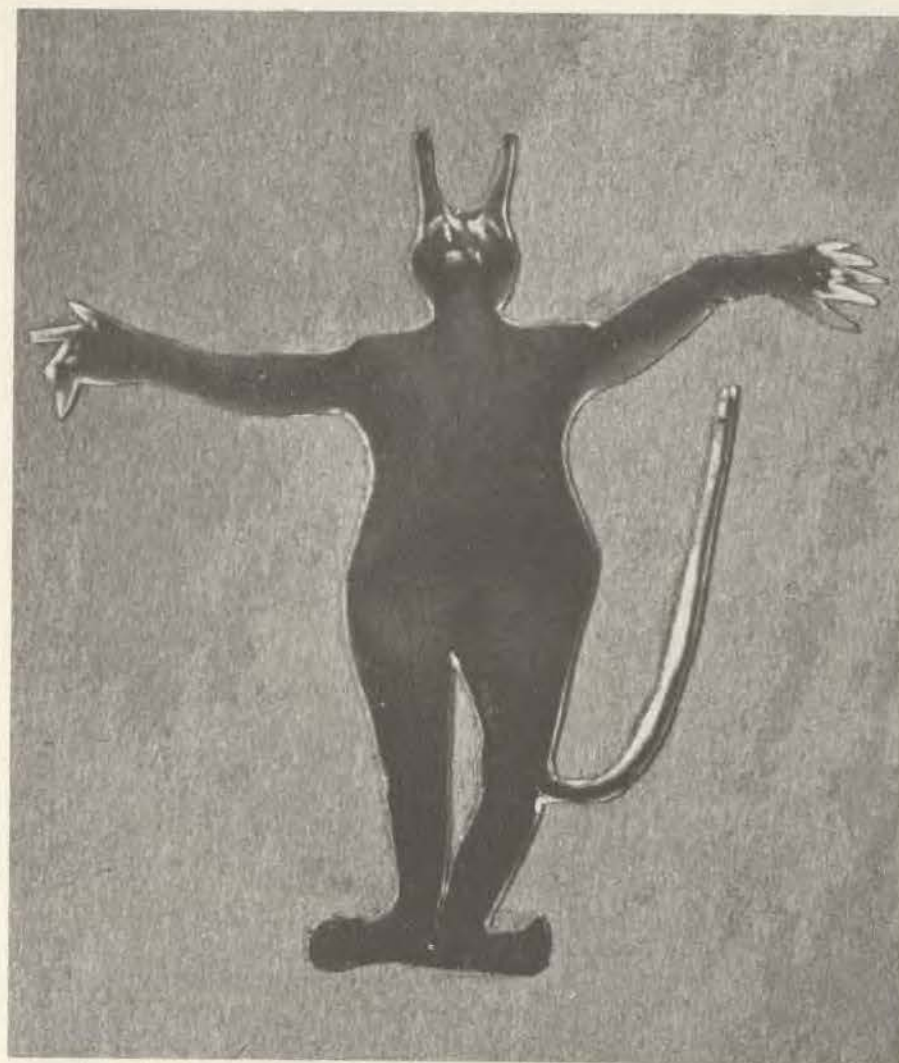
Although Normal women did not engage in varsity sports, they did more than just cheer the men's teams. Many girls participated in inter-society and inter-class athletic contests. Those that did not were exposed to sports in the required physical education courses. A Women's Athletic Association was organized in 1925-26 and a year later it joined the National Women's Athletic Association. Under its auspices, girls participated in swimming, track, field, and tennis meets as well as soccer, hockey, basketball, and volleyball tournaments. Those competing successfully earned an "N" sweater and became a member of the "N" Club. The W.A.A. also

²³³T.H. Harris to A.B. Dinwiddie, April 23, 1923, *ibid.*

²³⁴*Survey Commission Report*, 34.

²³⁵*The Natchitoches Times*, October 26, 1923; *The Natchitoches Enterprise*, November 8, 1923; "Normal Names Athletic Team," November 8, 1922 [1923], Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U. Other names submitted were: Spartans, Lions, Fighters, Warriors, Chiefs, Eagles, Falcons, Boosters, Sharks, Braves, Gridiron Knights, Bearcats, Daredevils, Emperors, Cannons, Deers, Bucks, Musketeers, Invincibles, Big Chiefs, Panthers, Indians, Giants, Wolves, Serpents, Pelicans, Prather's Ground Hogs, Royalists, Victors, Cyclops, Professors, Cannon Balls, Cavaliers, Leopards, Reds(kins), Pioneers, Wasps and Rattlesnakes.

²³⁶*Potpourri*, 1924. Another indication of the growing spirit at the Normal was the erection of a large "N" on top of the college water tower. Fourteen feet high and twelve feet wide, the letter contained 100 light bulbs and could be seen for several miles. *The Natchitoches Enterprise*, January 17, 1924.



The Normal Demon

sponsored popular campus activities such as the "Barndoor-Bailhay Circus" and a masquerade Carnival Ball.²³⁷

Most colleges develop unique traditions throughout the years and the Normal was no exception. Among the interesting traditions of the early Normal were the

²³⁷*Potpourri*, 1928.

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cedar rope, senior day, class memorials, and the May Day celebration. The first three involved the graduating classes of the Normal. The cedar rope was a ceremony added to the commencement exercises in 1913. A cedar rope, made by the students themselves, was carried on the shoulders of the graduates and then passed on to the next class as a symbol of the continuing responsibility of upholding the high ideals of the Normal.²³⁸ In 1928 the first senior day was held during which the seniors were honored at an investiture ceremony where they received their caps from President Roy. The next year, senior day activities were expanded to include a noon banquet and an evening reception honoring the graduates.²³⁹ Before graduating, each class showed its gratitude to the Normal by giving the school a class memorial. In a dedication ceremony, the class roll, brief biographies of its members, the graduation program and invitation were placed in a copper box and enclosed in the masonry of the memorial. A marble tablet marked the gift. The eight quarterly classes from the summer of 1913 through the spring of 1915 each gave an electrolier which lined the entrance walks. The next sixteen classes, from the summer of 1915 to the spring of 1919, gave the memorial gate which was erected in the late fall of 1919. The summer class of 1919 donated a ninety-foot flag-staff. The succeeding five classes, from the fall of 1919 through the fall of 1920, gave furniture for the Social Room while the summer, winter, and spring classes of 1925 presented the college with the fishpond and fountain in front of Caldwell Hall. Evidently, the custom of class memorials ended in 1925, for no later mention of class gifts was made in the Normal catalogs.²⁴⁰ Another major celebration begun during the Roy years was the May Festival. The first festival in 1915 included the election of a May queen, her coronation, and a May Pole dance performed by more than five hundred white-clad girls. Folk dancing, racing, and other activities filled the day. The next year, the festival program emphasized dances based on Shakespeare's plays. For years the May Festival was the major annual event on campus.²⁴¹

While the Normal students were expanding their campus activities, they also became increasingly involved with national events and movements. In particular, the entrance of the United States into World War I in April, 1917, had a profound effect on the college. Patriotism swept the Normal and its young men rushed into military service "to make the world safe for democracy." With tremendous pride, and a little exaggeration, the 1919 *Potpourri* declared:

The spirit of '17 is unsurpassed by any other in history. For a typical picture of this spirit just cast your eyes on Normal in the spring of 1917, then

²³⁸Ibid., 1913, 188; Pierce Memoirs, Pierce Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; A.L. Ducournau, interview with author, Natchitoches, La., January 30, 1984.

²³⁹*Potpourri*, 1928; *ibid.*, 1929.

²⁴⁰*Normal Quarterly*, 1929, 97; *The Natchitoches Enterprise*, June 26, 1919.

²⁴¹*Ibid.*, April 29, May 6, 1915; *The Shreveport Times*, May 29, 1916; *Current Sauce*, May 6, 1915.

Upward and Onward



May Day Celebration

in the fall of 1918. In the spring of 1917 there were more than a hundred boys in attendance — a fine hardy group, living in peace and dreaming of the future when they should be directing the footsteps of the youth of the state. When the long contest of right against might closed in fall of 1918, there was not a boy of military age in the school. All who were able to bear arms had gone "to do and to die for the eternal right."²⁴²

In May 1918 President Roy proudly reported that the service banner of the school, representing students, graduates and ex-students, contained 161 stars with one being gold. The gold star honored Louis M. Griffin who was one of the first volunteers from the State Normal and was the first Louisiana man to die in service.²⁴³

Those students remaining at the Normal followed closely the progress of the conflict and enthusiastically supported America's efforts to deal with war emergencies at home and abroad. President Roy announced, "The Normal School has endeavored to respond practically to every call upon its faculty and students in connection with the war. Nineteen activities and drives and sixteen subordinate ones have been engaged in."²⁴⁴ A "Campaign of Patriotism Through Education" was begun and Normalites eagerly enrolled in the new courses. Especially popular

²⁴²*Potpourri*, 1919, 11.

²⁴³Minutes, Executive Committee, Board of Administrators, May 27, 1918, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *Potpourri*, 1919, 10.

²⁴⁴Minutes, Executive Committee, Board of Administrators, May 27, 1918, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

were three courses which, under the auspices of Herbert Hoover, Federal Food Administrator, presented information on the production, use, and conservation of food. Hundreds of students studied the world's food supply and learned acceptable substitutes for meat, wheat, and sugar to stretch America's supply of these vital commodities. Equally important, the girls learned how to make the substitutes attractive and palatable.²⁴⁵ To enable Normalites to understand the great world crisis and the foundations of a strong democracy, a special course in War History was offered. A War French course was also taught for the young men who would soon see military service in France. Fortunately, the girls likewise demonstrated a strong interest in the War French courses because in one summer term, with most of the boys in military service, fifty-nine girls and only one boy enrolled. The library holdings expanded with books, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, and other publications designed to keep the students aware of current events. Many of the assembly programs were also dedicated to war topics and patriotic themes.²⁴⁶

As the world war continued, the Normal became involved in aspects of war work other than purely academic activities. The faculty and students contributed generously to each of the four Liberty bond drives. The first bond drive netted \$1,350 on the "Hill"; the second, \$4,150; the third, \$12,600; and the fourth, \$17,300. Lesser amounts were given to 1917 and 1918 Red Cross drives, a Y.M.C.A. drive, United War Work drive, Smilage Campaign, Thrift Campaign, and Jewish and Armenian relief funds.²⁴⁷ Supporting the American cause financially, however, was not enough for many Normal girls who wanted to be more actively involved in war work. Under the leadership of the Patriotic League, organized on campus in 1918, and the National Auxiliary Red Cross, Normal students made thousands of bandages and compresses and knitted socks, sweaters, helmets, and mufflers. The girls, under the direction of Miss Roberta Newell, divided into squads with faculty and student captains and worked during vacant periods, before dinner, and on Saturdays and Sundays. Other students prepared Christmas boxes for American servicemen overseas. The Patriotic League initiated wheatless and meatless days in the boarding club which were accepted by the girls without complaint. The

²⁴⁵ Potpourri, 1919, 13; *Normal Quarterly of the Louisiana State Normal School. 1918 Summer School For Teachers*, VI (October 1917), 14-15; Potpourri, 1919, 13; *Current Sauce*, January 31, 1918.

²⁴⁶ Potpourri, 1919, 13. The library during Roy's early administration was located in two rooms in Caldwell Hall. Later it was moved to the second floor of the Old Model School building where it occupied a reading room seating 108 persons and a reference room seating thirty persons. In 1929 the collection contained 28,595 volumes including 21,262 reference and general literature books, 934 bound periodicals, and 6,399 government documents. There were an additional 167 newspapers and magazines on easily accessible racks. Students could check out as many as three books for periods varying from overnight to two weeks. *Normal Quarterly*, 1929, 71-72.

²⁴⁷ Potpourri, 1919, 15; "War Activities at Louisiana State Normal To February, 1918," Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

league also presented patriotic programs at the Normal and, through graduating teachers, throughout the state.²⁴⁸ As American college students did across the nation, the Normalites cheerfully and patriotically supported every major war activity.

The women of the Normal also demonstrated an interest in the feminist movement during the early Roy years. Interestingly, the student newspaper, *Current Sauce*, covered the movement well while the official college publications tended to ignore it. In the summer of 1915 Miss Roberta Newell of the Normal faculty presented a lecture on the feminist movement and a few weeks later Miss Kate Gordon of New Orleans spoke on women's suffrage. She urged women to organize clubs in every parish which would recruit workers, distribute literature, and pressure local and state officials to support the suffrage movement.²⁴⁹ By 1916 some Normal girls had become enthusiastic supporters of the suffrage movement as evidenced in an editorial in the *Current Sauce*:

Several states of the United States have lately given expression to their progress by giving the franchise to their women. We are very glad to see this sign of departure from medieval ideas for we know that in the barbaric stage man considered himself not only the physical superior but the mental superior of women as well. Somehow despite the progress which man has made in civilization he has, for some reason, clung to this erroneous idea concerning woman's mentality, and, consequently refused her the ballot. For many years the higher institutions of learning were closed to women.

It was held that she had no use for any knowledge except a meagre training in the care of the home, fancy work, and social etiquette. She might read the less deep of the literary masterpieces but the realms of Science were considered too deep for her supposedly shallow appreciation. Recently these fields have been opened to women, and, in many cases, the great stars of the scientific universe have been women. Still the ballot has been withheld but now suffrage is one of the most intensely interesting and most important questions before the great minds of the world. How this will be solved was suggested by the example of the states which led in the great movement. Let us hope that the other states will soon follow their worthy example and not bar from the ruling of the country some of its best citizens and from the decisions to be made some of the greatest and most capable minds.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁸ Potpourri, 1919, 12; *Normal Quarterly*, 1919, 34.

²⁴⁹ *Current Sauce*, July 15, July 29, 1915. For Kate Gordon's role in the Louisiana suffrage movement see B.H. Gilley, "Kate Gordon and Louisiana Woman Suffrage," *Louisiana History*, XXIV (Summer, 1983), 289-306.

²⁵⁰ *Current Sauce*, January 27, 1916.

With the suffrage question gaining advocates on the "Hill," some town women suggested that the Normal students take a straw vote on the issue. Excitement mounted and campaigning began. Several days before the vote, the boys and girls freely debated the issue at Friday assembly. That evening the boys occupied the tennis grandstand to voice their anti-suffrage opinions to the club girls who responded with a suffragette parade. The next morning at breakfast, a large poster with the words "Votes for Women" hung over one of the girls' tables. At dinner a similar poster with the wording "Down With the Women, Boys" appeared over the boys' tables. The girls ended the spirited day with a political rally during which they imagined themselves as candidates for state offices in 1928. Amid much excitement, the students voted on Monday morning and the results were predictable: 360 for equal suffrage and 236 against it.²⁵¹ After 1916 the Normal girls apparently lost interest in the equal suffrage movement, perhaps, because of the fast approaching world war.

Unfortunately, the students at the Normal in the early Roy years did not escape the ravages of sickness as did those of the earlier years. Twice, in 1912 and 1918, classes were suspended at the school because of epidemics. The 1912 outbreak of paratyphoid fever and, perhaps, even typhoid fever, was serious. An investigation by the state department of health could not determine the exact source of infection, but it did reveal unsanitary conditions at the Normal, including the infestation of the school by bedbugs, "filthy disease bearing insupportable vermin of the night," as one newspaper termed the critters. The health department's study, released by Dr. Oscar Dowling, president of the State Board of Health, reported other unsanitary conditions at the Normal: an uncovered surface privy only 140 feet from the dining hall, swarming flies in the kitchen and dining hall, contaminated water and milk, stagnant mosquito-breeding pools of water, improper procedures in the laundry, poor health care in the infirmary, and poorly functioning toilets in the main building.²⁵² *The Natchitoches Times*, which had earlier opposed the reelection of President Roy, condemned the Normal president for the unhealthy conditions and demanded his removal. The local newspaper also reacted angrily when Dr. Dowling announced that the city's water was contaminated with bacteria.²⁵³ Altogether, between 118 and 150 girls contracted the slow fever forcing the closure of the Normal for over three weeks in late November and early December. During this time, measures were taken to eradicate all sources of infection. Fifteen buildings were fumigated, the interiors of five buildings were painted, beds and portable washstands dipped in white lead, paint, and turpentine, bed springs flared with gasoline blowtorches, floors mopped with mercury and ammonia solutions, 452 mattresses out of 544 burned, a water purification plant and storage tanks installed, stiles-type toilets erected for employees, and proper disposal of old out-

²⁵¹Ibid.; *The Natchitoches Enterprise*, January 27, 1916.

²⁵²*The Shreveport Times*, November 28, 1912, December 20, 1912; *The Natchitoches Times*, November 29, 1912, December 6, 1912; *The Natchitoches Enterprise*, November 21, 1912.

²⁵³*The Natchitoches Times*, November 29, 1912, December 6, 1912.

houses and excreta. Plans were readied for a new milkhouse and refrigeration plant. Altogether, 4,997 pounds of sulphur, 247½ quarts of formaldehyde, and 107¾ pounds of potash were used in the massive cleanup.²⁵⁴ Certainly President Roy had to shoulder some of the responsibility for the filthy conditions at the Normal, although it should be realized that he had been in office only a little over a year when the epidemic broke out. Furthermore, he had begun a campaign to eradicate the bedbug infestation and eliminate the breeding places of flies and mosquitoes prior to the epidemic.²⁵⁵ On December 9, 1912, the crisis ended when the Normal reopened after fulfilling all the recommendations of the health department. Practically all the students returned to their work, but, undoubtedly, they were dismayed when the Christmas holidays, except Christmas itself, were cancelled and classes held on Saturdays to make up for the days lost.²⁵⁶

In the years immediately following the 1912 fever, the health of the Normal students was remarkably good despite a serious measles outbreak in December 1918, and a false report of the school's closing in January 1918 because of the prevalence of cerebro spinal meningitis in Natchitoches.²⁵⁷ However, in 1918 the Normal School was once again closed because of the raging Spanish influenza epidemic of that year. In this instance, the Normal authorities deserved praise rather than criticism for their handling of a flu epidemic that was nationwide, forced public closings, and was often fatal. President Roy acted promptly and efficiently in protecting the health of the Normal students and keeping their worried parents informed of the conditions at the school. When Dr. Dowling ordered all schools in Natchitoches parish closed on October 9, 1918, because of the prevalence of influenza, the Normal School did not then have a single case of flu. President Roy closed the training school immediately but continued the Normal's operation by quarantining it from the outside. All students living off-campus were excluded from the school, although some of the town students were allowed to move into the club within twenty-four hours. While the disease spread in Natchitoches, for the next ten days, there was still not a single case at the Normal. With great satisfaction, President Roy wrote T.H. Harris on October 17, "I am very glad to report that we have been successful in keeping influenza away from the Normal up to this time."²⁵⁸ But the task of keeping a spreading epidemic from a boarding school was impossible. Ironically, on the same day he had written Superintendent Harris, Dr.

²⁵⁴*The Shreveport Times*, December 20, 1912.

²⁵⁵Roy Papers, [n.d.], University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

²⁵⁶*The Natchitoches Enterprise*, December 5, 1912, December [26], 1912.

²⁵⁷Minutes, Board of Administrators, May 27, 1918, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *ibid.*, July 19, 1918.

²⁵⁸V.L. Roy to Dr. Oscar Dowling, October 17, 1918, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; V.L. Roy to Members of The Board of Administrators of State Normal School, October 19, 1918, *ibid.*; V.L. Roy to T.H. Harris, October 17, 1918, *ibid.*; *The Natchitoches Enterprise*, October 10, 1918. For an excellent account of the 1918 influenza epidemic in Shreveport and to a lesser extent in Louisiana see Ann McLaurin, "The Influenza Epidemic of 1918 in Shreveport," *North Louisiana Historical Association Journal*, XIII (Winter, 1982), 1-14.

J.B. Stephens, local health officer, notified President Roy that he had diagnosed several cases of influenza at the Normal infirmary.²⁵⁹

The Normal president reacted immediately to the unwelcome news informing the students of the outbreak, closing the school, and notifying Dr. Dowling of the situation. That evening, Normalites whose parents could come pick them up by automobile were allowed to go home. The others were detained until they could be examined and found free of infection so as to prevent the spread of the disease through train travel. Within two days, all examinations had been completed without another case of influenza appearing. The students then immediately left for home wearing influenza masks to protect them from infection on the trip. President Roy later felt that perhaps the students would have been safer staying at the school but he realized that neither the students nor their parents would have allowed that after the appearance of influenza on campus.²⁶⁰ On November 18, after the State Board of Health authorized the reopening of Louisiana schools, the Normal resumed classes. Within three days, two cases of influenza again developed and President Roy sought Dr. Dowling's advice on what action he should take. The doctor simply recommended that the ill be kept under constant care and isolated and that anyone who had contact with the victims be watched. During the next three weeks more than one hundred Normalites suffered flu but the cases were generally very mild. As he had done in the past, President Roy contacted the parents of every ill student and answered every inquiry concerning health conditions at the Normal. Gradually the disease abated and the tired Normal authorities relaxed.²⁶¹ Considering how extensive the 1918 influenza epidemic was in Louisiana and the high mortality rate which resulted, the Normal School had fared well. Altogether, there was a total of 132 flu cases at the Normal, but not one fatality.²⁶² Furthermore, in the remaining eleven years of President Roy's tenure there were no serious outbreaks of illness at the Normal.

When President Roy begrudgingly left the Louisiana State Normal on June 30, 1929, he must have reflected with satisfaction on his eighteen years at the helm of the institution. Despite problems and opposition and his own shortcomings, he had presided over the college when the physical plant, curricula, name, student body,

²⁵⁹V.L. Roy to Members of the Board of Administrators of State Normal School, October 19, 1918, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

²⁶⁰Ibid.; Telegram from Oscar Dowling to V.L. Roy, October 17, 1918, *ibid.*; V.L. Roy to Dr. Oscar Dowling, October 21, 1918, *ibid.*; *The Natchitoches Enterprise*, October 24, 1918.

²⁶¹Louisiana State Board of Health, November 6, 1918, *ibid.*; V.L. Roy to Dr. Oscar Dowling, November 21, 1918, *ibid.*; Oscar Dowling to V.L. Roy, November 23, 1918, *ibid.*; V.L. Roy to J.S. Allison, December 5, 1918, *ibid.*; V.L. Roy to Mrs. L.M. Cook, December 9, 1918, *ibid.*; Minutes, Board of Administrators, May 26, 1919, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *The Shreveport Times*, December 7, 1918.

²⁶²Minutes, Board of Administrators, May 26, 1919, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

and campus activities underwent radical change. In 1929 the Normal College was the twelfth largest teacher training institution in the United States. It had graduated a total of 6,486 teachers in its two and four year programs. These Normal-trained teachers taught an average of eight years after graduation so the cumulative effect of the institution on Louisiana's public schools was striking.²⁶³ In 1921 a national educator had succinctly evaluated President Roy's work at the Normal when he wrote him "... you ... have erected there out of the beaten channels of progress an educational institution, which, while doing no violence to Dixie traditions, just radiates the spirit of the New South."²⁶⁴ The compliment must have pleased the Normal president, for three years earlier, a newspaper reporter, upon visiting the Normal and interviewing its president, had concluded that President Roy's slogan was "Upward and Onward."²⁶⁵ Not only did the Louisiana State Normal College move "Upward and Onward" under V.L. Roy, its advancement created a parallel effect on Louisiana's entire public education system.

²⁶³*Potpourri, 1929; Twenty-third Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Normal College, Natchitoches, Louisiana. The State Teachers College of Louisiana, 1930. Normal Quarterly of the Louisiana State Normal College, XIX (April 1930), 8-9.*

²⁶⁴G. Vernon Bennett to V.L. Roy, April 6, 1921, Roy Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

²⁶⁵*The Shreveport Times*, March 25, 1917.

"THE LIGHT OF A NEW DAY"

Although disappointed at leaving the Louisiana State Normal College in June 1929, Victor L. Roy was perhaps fortunate for less than four months later the United States plunged into a depression. Across the nation college presidents faced drastically reduced, and, in some cases, non-existent, capital outlay budgets, diminished salary schedules, and destitute students struggling to continue their academic pursuits. The gloom over American institutions of higher learning was especially pronounced in the early years of the Great Depression which started with the stock market crash of October 1929. In the later years of the depression which hung like a ghostly pall over the nation throughout the 1930s, massive doses of federal and state relief began to revitalize American colleges as well as the general economy. Building projects and student aid primed by New Deal funding infused new life into campuses across the United States. Although some feared government involvement in higher education, most welcomed the antidepression measures.

The State Normal College experienced the depression and recovery under the administrations of two presidents, William White Tison and Albert Asa Fredericks. President Tison directed the institution during the very bleak period 1929 to 1934. In those years the physical appearance of the college changed very little with only one new building erected. On the academic side, significant, but generally unnoticed, improvements were made. Curricula were modified and strengthened, new departments and programs introduced, and the first national honor society installed on campus. Running afoul of Governor Huey P. Long, President Tison was replaced by A.A. Fredericks in 1934. Both men were born and reared in rural north Louisiana, had extensive public school teaching experience, and were chosen from the ranks of the Normal faculty for elevation to the presidency. But there the similarities ended. A.A. Fredericks was a very astute, pro-Long leader who was a combination of politician and educator. In fact, he had the distinction of serving as president of the State Normal College and state senator from the twenty-fourth district simultaneously, an unusual position even in Louisiana. Because of his political savvy and Long connection, President Fredericks was able to obtain incredible funding through state administered federal programs. During his administration, the appearance of the Normal was changed more than at any previous time: thirty-nine buildings were constructed or improved, and the grounds were beautified. On the academic side, innovations were less striking but curricula were expanded with the addition of a liberal arts program and a semester system was instituted. Student life changed with the relaxation of many of the Roy era restrictions. Under Presidents Tison and Fredericks there was faculty insecurity

and unrest due to both the economic depression and politicization of Louisiana education. The school also lost its accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools during the Fredericks administration. In 1941 with the installation of an anti-Long governor, A.A. Fredericks was removed from the presidency but by that time the Louisiana State Normal College had a modern physical plant and multifaceted programs of study.

William White Tison was born August 28, 1883, in the rolling hills of north central Louisiana a few miles from Dry Prong to William Joseph and Laura Evelon (Satcher) Tison. Young William attended public schools in his home community and in Colfax, Louisiana. In 1899 he arrived on the Normal campus where he enrolled in the Model school for two years. Upon completion of his studies he immediately entered the State Normal school's two-year teacher training program graduating in 1904 with a teaching certificate.¹ His attainment of the Normal certificate later made him the first president to serve the State Normal College who had graduated from the institution. For the next thirteen years Tison held a variety of teaching positions in the public schools of Louisiana. For two years he taught lower grades in a two-room school in Scott outside of Lafayette. In 1906 he moved into administration with his acceptance of an assistant principalship at Bunkie High School. A year later he gained his first principalship at Melville High School where he served four years. After an additional two years as principal at White Castle High School, he was appointed principal of Marksville High School where he remained four years before joining the faculty of the State Normal College.²

In the years 1906 to 1914 William W. Tison not only taught in the regular public school sessions but also attended summer schools at the University of Chicago, Tulane University, and Louisiana State University where he was awarded the A.B. degree in 1914.³ The same year he earned his bachelor's degree, young Tison experienced his first college teaching. During the summers of 1914 and 1916 he taught chemistry at the Normal School and during the summer of 1915 held a similar position at Louisiana Polytechnic Institute at Ruston. Finding college teaching to his liking, in 1917 he accepted a position as head of the department of chemistry at the Normal School where he successfully served until his election in 1929 to the presidency of the institution. Realizing the need for advanced study, he

¹"William White Tison," *National Encyclopedia of American Biography*, 58 (Clifton, New Jersey, 1979), 555-56; Ralph M. Combs, "President William White Tison," Camilla Tison Rachal Collection, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana. Cited hereafter as Combs, "Tison."

²J.F. Guardia, "William White Tison," in "The Fiftieth Anniversary of The Act of the Legislature Establishing The Louisiana State Normal School, 1884-1934" (typewritten). Cited hereafter as Guardia, "Tison"; Combs, "Tison".

³"Faculty Spotlight," *Chemistry and Physics News Letter*, Louisiana State University, I (May 1951), 10. Cited hereafter as "Faculty Spotlight."

entered graduate work at the University of Chicago where he was awarded the M.S. degree in 1924. As head of the chemistry department, Professor Tison directed an expansion of course offerings. In the early years he was the sole member of the department and taught all chemistry courses himself. However, in 1925 three new courses were added to the existing four courses, and a second faculty member was hired. In 1926 he taught summer school at Peabody College in Nashville, Tennessee.⁴ Coinciding with Tison's duties in the chemistry department, was his service as executive secretary of the Alumni Association for seven years. Because of his dedication, life memberships in the association significantly increased and the alumni loan fund grew from eight thousand to twelve thousand dollars. During these years, Professor Tison also maintained personal contacts with thousands of Normal students and alumni.⁵

Election to the presidency of the State Normal College on February 27, 1929, was a pleasant but unexpected honor for William White Tison. Although he had applied for the presidency of Louisiana Tech, he had never sought the Normal position but when Mr. Roy resigned Mr. Tison was unanimously elected by the State Board effective July 1, 1929.⁶ The *Current Sauce* described the president-elect as a "man of sterling character," noting that even though a majority of students did not know him he was admired and respected by those who did. The student newspaper characterized him as a man of determination, enthusiasm, fairness, sincerity, and integrity.⁷ Mr. Roy also praised his successor stating, "The thing that softened the blow for me yesterday was the information that the destinies of this institution would pass into the hands of a man of unswerving integrity, a man with a fine sense of justice. . . . Mr. Tison is highly connected educationally and professionally." He urged the ". . . young people to stand by him and to be loyal. He is going to be your friend, and he will treat you fairly and squarely." In concluding, the outgoing president expressed "great satisfaction that the destiny of the Louisiana State Normal college does not fall into incompetent and inefficient hands."⁸ Otis R. Crew, a faculty member, described Mr. Tison as "thought well of by all who know him. He is a friend to all who deserve it and never too busy to help, aid, or advise anyone who goes to him on any subject, if in his power to do so."⁹ The journal of the Louisiana Teachers Association joined the chorus of praise: "Mr. Tison's election to the presidency of the State Normal College will

⁴Combs, "Tison"; Guardia, "Tison"; "Faculty Spotlight," 10.

⁵Guardia, "Tison"; Combs, "Tison"; Otis R. Crew, "History of Northwestern State College of Louisiana (typewritten), 45. Cited hereafter as Crew, "Northwestern State College."

⁶*Current Sauce*, March 7, 1929; T.H. Harris to W.W. Tison, February 28, 1929, Chaffin Collection, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana; *The Natchitoches Times*, March 1, 1929; *Potpourri*, 1929.

⁷*Current Sauce*, March 7, 1929.

⁸*Ibid.*; *The Natchitoches Times*, March 8, 1929.

⁹Crew, "Northwestern State College," undated newspaper clipping, Rachal Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

meet with the approval of the school people throughout the State. He is a Louisiana man who has a wide experience in the field of education."¹⁰ *The Natchitoches Enterprise* characterized the president-elect as "a man of vision; broad in his views; a man of learning and culture, kind, considerate, sympathetic by nature and always interested in the welfare [of those] with whom he ever comes in contact."¹¹ In July a group of leading citizens including representatives of the city, school board, chamber of commerce, newspapers, and local banks went to the Normal to welcome President Tison personally and offer him their complete assistance and cooperation.¹²

Despite the enthusiastic compliments and expressions of warm welcome and cooperation which he received in the summer of 1929, W.W. Tison encountered serious problems involving the faculty and students during his five-year tenure. Although some of the incidents were not completely under his control, as president of the institution he had to assume responsibility for handling them. Considering the circumstances of Mr. Roy's forced resignation and Mr. Tison's replacing him, the faculty understandably demonstrated uneasiness and anxiety concerning politicization of the college. Their trepidation was seemingly confirmed by President-elect Tison's firing of a faculty member, M.E. Downs, in March 1929. Mr. Downs was an assistant professor of political science whom Governor Huey P. Long accused of criticizing his administration in the classroom. President Roy had withstood gubernatorial pressure earlier and refused to fire Professor Downs but President-elect Tison, the governor's cousin, dismissed the popular teacher. When Downs proposed producing affidavits from his students denying he had made derogatory remarks about the governor, his offer was refused by Alvin Good, head of the department of social sciences and by W.W. Tison. The next day President-elect Tison announced that "less than a half dozen" additional faculty members would be dismissed by July 1, 1929. Refusing to give the names of the endangered professors until the State Board approved his recommendations, he stated, "It will be my policy to make only such changes as will make the work of the State Normal College effective as I see it."¹³ *The Natchitoches Times* in an editorial commented, "Our Normal School and Natchitoches generally have been in a stew about the shake-up at that institution — and we are hearing a whole lot of things that we would prefer not to hear."¹⁴

Upon learning of the dismissal of Professor Downs the student association held a meeting attended by some eight hundred Normal upperclassmen who cheered Professor Downs and adopted a resolution to the State Board of Education exoner-

¹⁰*The Natchitoches Times*, July 5, 1929.

¹¹*The Natchitoches Enterprise*, July 4, 1929.

¹²*Ibid.*, July 18, 1929.

¹³*The Natchitoches Times*, March 15, 1929; *The Shreveport Times*, March 13, 1929.

¹⁴*The Natchitoches Times*, March 22, 1929.

ating him of all charges of criticizing Governor Long in his classes. The members of Downs's classes also met and approved a resolution to the State Board declaring that "the governor of Louisiana and his policy as such was never a topic of discussion either by Mr. Downs or members of his classes."¹⁵ Members of the Normal faculty, with one notable exception, remained passive during the Downs incident possibly because of President-elect Tison's terse announcement of additional faculty dismissals or for other reasons. The exception was Mrs. Olive Long Cooper, the governor's sister, who taught art at the Normal. She allegedly threatened "to see that the Students' association does not meet again" and that Gillis L. Ledet, its president, be "shipped" from the college. *The Shreveport Times* lamented that "... this one act of despotism renders the administration of President-elect Tison unserviceable to the state" and that it made the State Normal College "a mere pawn in a malodorous political game."¹⁶

Concern over the politicization of the Normal College flared up again in August and September 1929, when it was rumored that Ruppert H. Cooke, club manager, would be dismissed to provide a position for a friend of Governor Long. Superintendent Harris, who was passing through Natchitoches on his way to a teachers' institute in Mansfield, denied the reports of the impending dismissal and declared "... that he had no doubt that all employees of the college are safe in their positions as long as they are faithful and efficient." Praising President Tison, the superintendent described him as "an able executive who will be influenced in his actions only by the determination to do what is best for the Normal."¹⁷ When asked about the rumored hiring of R.G. Cockern, ex-superintendent of Allen Parish schools and alleged political ally of Governor Long, as a faculty member, Harris responded that he knew nothing of Mr. Cockern's politics or relations with the governor, but that his credentials and vast experience in Louisiana's public school system made him an excellent choice. Meanwhile Rupert H. Cooke resigned his Normal position to accept a better one as business manager of Gulf Park College in Mississippi.¹⁸ Whether the rumors of the politicization of the college were true or not is not as important as people's conception of them, and many felt that there was undue interference from Baton Rouge at the Normal.

Within a few years the Normal faculty, faced with the possibility of layoffs and reduced salaries because of the depression, accepted conditions at the Normal with

¹⁵*The Shreveport Times*, March 14, 1929.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, March 16, 1929, March 17, 1929. The State Board of Education proceedings only briefly mention the Downs affair. On May 20, 1929, the board decided "that the matter of Mr. Downs' retention be referred to President-elect Tison." *Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, May 20, 1929, Bulletin 154 (T.H. Harris, 1929), 4. Clifford Mitchell states that "as president he [Tison] took care to see that no member of the faculty should criticize the governor adversely." Clifford Mitchell, "Growth of State Control of Public Education in Louisiana" (Ph.D. dissertation), Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1942), 418.

¹⁷*The Natchitoches Times*, September 13, 1929.

¹⁸*Ibid.*

little apparent concern and no protest. The same attitude, however, was not reflected in the student body. In 1932 President Tison encountered what might be termed the first full-fledged student rebellion which led to the expulsion of two student leaders. The incident began on Wednesday, March 16, 1932, when the Normal students, refusing to leave daily assembly, appointed a committee to present President Tison with a demand for an additional Easter holiday on Monday, March 28. They threatened to boycott the Washington Bicentennial celebration scheduled on campus March 19 if their ultimatum was refused. The Normal president agreed to the students' demand but only after pointing out to them that their course of action was improper and obtaining an apology from them. Immediately after the assembly, William J. Dodd, a junior, telephoned news of the students' strike and demands to *The Shreveport Journal* which published a lengthy article. Angry over what he considered an incorrect and unauthorized newspaper account, President Tison again met with the student committee which once more admitted that they had taken "hasty" action in demanding a holiday and stated that the news release was the action of "an irresponsible student." Finally learning that Dodd was responsible for the newspaper account, President Tison called the young man out of class Friday morning and notified him that he had been suspended from the Normal. Shortly after being dismissed, Dodd went to the noon assembly, took the rostrum from President Tison, and addressed the students exhorting them to rebellion. According to several eye witnesses, the young student showed disrespect to the Normal president at the assembly by "tapping" him on the back and calling him "W.W." Another student, Alton Rockhold, was also suspended for speaking in support of Dodd.¹⁹

William Dodd threatened to appeal his suspension to the Board of Education, but instead brought suit against President Tison in the 10th district court in Natchitoches. Judge J.W. Jones, Jr. ruled in favor of Dodd declaring that his expulsion was "unjust, arbitrary and illegal" and that the public had a right to know what was happening at the Normal. He ordered Dodd reinstated as a student in good standing at the college.²⁰ After the rendering of the court's decision, President Tison appealed to the Louisiana State Supreme Court on the basis that Dodd was not authorized to release college news, that he fostered the insubordination of the student body at the Friday assembly, and that he should have sought reinstatement.

¹⁹*The Shreveport Journal*, March 18, 1932, April 2, 1932; undated newspaper clippings, Melrose Scrapbook, #72, 92-94, Melrose Collection, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana. Cited hereafter as Melrose Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; State Ex Rel. William J. Dodd, Relator, Appellee, versus W.W. Tison, President Louisiana State Normal College, Respondent, Appellant, Supreme Court of Louisiana, No. 31, 849 (Natchitoches, [1932]), 1-36. Cited hereafter as Supreme Court, No. 31, 849; *The Shreveport Times*, March 17, 1932.

²⁰*The Shreveport Journal*, April 2, 1932; newspaper clippings, Melrose Scrapbook #72, 92-94, Melrose Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *The Natchitoches Times*, April 8, 1932.

ment from the State Board of Education and not the courts. The State Board supported President Tison's appeal to the Supreme Court. Three of its members, all lawyers, prepared briefs in the case while H.H. White, board president, argued the case orally before the Supreme Court. The high court overruled the lower court and decided in favor of President Tison.²¹ Despite the court's decision, before the end of the session William Dodd was readmitted to the Normal probably because the State Board wanted to avoid any more adverse publicity for the college. The unfortunate incident, however, left a strained relationship between the Normal president and some of his students.

Shortly after the Dodd disturbance, President Tison was faced with the more serious challenge of maintaining the Normal's academic standards with a drastically slashed budget. Stating that the financial plight of the state demanded it, the State Board of Education ordered the salaries of all its employees reduced. The salaries of the presidents of the three major colleges under its jurisdiction, Louisiana State Normal College, Louisiana Polytechnic Institute, and Southwestern Louisiana Institute, were reduced from seventy-two hundred to six thousand dollars. All other employee salaries, excluding common laborers, were reduced by 10 percent if they were over one thousand dollars and by 5 percent if they fell in the range from \$601 to one thousand dollars. Common laborers hired by an institution were to receive the prevailing wage of the community. The college presidents were also directed to submit a plan for the reorganization of their administrative and faculty staffs with the objective of employing only those required "to guarantee efficient service and at reasonable salaries." On an even more pessimistic note, the State Board warned that it might have to make further cuts in the colleges' budgets if financial conditions warranted such action.²² The effect of the economy measures on the academic standing of the Normal worried President Tison and the two members of the college's local executive committee, Mrs. D.C. Scarborough and J.L. Bryan. They urged the State Board to take every precaution to maintain the academic rating of the Normal during "these stressful times."²³ Fortunately for the Louisiana teachers' college, other states and educational institutions were suffering similar cut backs so there was no mass exodus of teachers from the Normal. In fact, the faculty became more scholastically qualified than at any previous time. In 1929, 47 percent of the faculty held graduate degrees. By 1934 the percentage

²¹ *Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, April 21, 1932, Bulletin 225 (T.H. Harris, 1932), 18; *Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, July 11, 1932, Bulletin 230 (T.H. Harris, 1932), 8; *The Natchitoches Times*, April 8, 1932, June 24, 1932; Supreme Court, No. 31, 849, 1-36.

²² *Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, July 26, 1932, Bulletin 231 (T.H. Harris, 1932), 3-5.

²³ Minutes, Board of Administrators, Louisiana State Normal College, July 23, 1932 (typewritten), n.p., Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana. Cited hereafter as A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

had increased to seventy-two and every member had at least a bachelor's degree.²⁴

While salaries and other items in the Normal's budget suffered substantial cuts, capital outlay funds were virtually nonexistent. In 1934 President Tison lamented that the state legislature had made no appropriations for buildings at the State Normal during the last six years.²⁵ He realized the needs of the Normal and persistently tried to obtain funds for the continued expansion of the physical plant. His failure was not due to a lack of initiative on his part but rather to the declining revenues in the state's coffers during the depression years. The 1928-1930 budget, prepared by President Roy, requested \$600 thousand for maintenance and support and \$360 thousand for buildings and improvements. Roy's proposals included a new library building, combined auditorium and administration building, and a women's dormitory.²⁶ The legislature responded with no building appropriation. In 1930 President Tison requested for the next two years \$640 thousand in maintenance and \$750 thousand for buildings and improvements. In addition to library and auditorium buildings, he cited the need for three additional women's dormitories and a structure to house the growing School of Music.²⁷ Again the legislature made no appropriation. Undaunted by previous failures, President Tison increased his request to \$850,000 for buildings and improvements for the 1932-1934 biennium. The additional hundred thousand dollars was for completion of Warren Easton and repairs and equipment. At the same time, perhaps in a conciliatory gesture, he reduced the Normal's request for maintenance by almost eighty-one thousand dollars.²⁸ Again the legislature responded negatively. Evidently giving up on obtaining capital outlay funds during the depression, President Tison made no building request for the 1934-1936 biennium although he did request \$265,514.15 for each of the two years for maintenance.²⁹ The legislature approved Tison's maintenance request and even added twenty-five thousand dollars to the 1934-1935 appropriation for repairs and improvements. At its meeting of July 23, 1934, the State Board announced the legislature's approval of the Normal's 1934-

²⁴ Crew, "Northwestern State College," 47. Crew included the training school supervisors in his percentages. Ralph R. Combs states that in 1929, 8 percent of the faculty had no degrees, 43 percent had master's degrees, and less than 9 percent Ph.D.s. According to his figures, by 1934 all faculty members had at least a bachelor's degree, 67 percent had master's degrees and about 9.5 percent Ph.D.s, Combs, "Tison."

²⁵ *Twenty-fifth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Normal College, Natchitoches, Louisiana, 1934. Normal Quarterly of the Louisiana State Normal College, XXII, supplement* (April 1934), 15. Cited hereafter as *Twenty-fifth Biennial Report, 1934*.

²⁶ *Twenty-second Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Normal College, Natchitoches, Louisiana, 1928. Normal Quarterly of the Louisiana State Normal College, XVII* (January 1928), 11. Cited hereafter as *Twenty-second Biennial Report, 1928*.

²⁷ *Twenty-third Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Normal College, Natchitoches, Louisiana, 1930. Normal Quarterly of the Louisiana State Normal College, XIX, supplement* (April 1930), 10. Cited hereafter as *Twenty-third Biennial Report, 1930*.

²⁸ *Twenty-fourth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Normal College, Natchitoches, Louisiana, 1932. Normal Quarterly of the Louisiana State Normal College, XXI, supplement* (April 1932), 10. Cited hereafter as *Twenty-fourth Biennial Report, 1932*.

²⁹ *Twenty-fifth Biennial Report, 1934, 15.*

1936 budget but it meant little to W.W. Tison for that day he was also dismissed as the institution's president.³⁰

Despite receiving no capital outlay funds during his tenure, President Tison was able to add one new structure to the campus. Realizing that thirty-eight thousand dollars in a contingency appropriation made by the 1926 legislature were available, in 1930 President Tison sought permission to use the money to build a combined auditorium and gymnasium for men. The State Board unanimously agreed to his request and the resulting brick structure not only housed physical education activities but also convocations and the state rallies.³¹ Frustrated in his plans to expand the physical plant, President Tison turned his attention to a worthwhile project which would require no funding. As both a beautification and educational project, he planned to dedicate a part of the campus to the planting of one of every variety of Louisiana trees.³²

Although limited in changing the physical appearance of the Normal, President Tison directed significant revision and expansion of the academic curricula. In February 1930 he presented a proposed commerce curriculum to the State Board which was quickly approved and the following November a new Department of Commerce was established.³³ The next year President Tison joined E.L. Stephens and G.W. Bond on a State Board-appointed committee to revise the four-year and two-year teaching curricula at the state colleges so that a student enrolled in a four-year curriculum could drop out at the end of two years and still secure a teaching certificate while one enrolled in a two-year course could continue into a four-year curriculum without loss of credits. The committee successfully reported a plan and the Normal proceeded to eliminate duplications in its curricula and to rearrange courses so a student could continue or drop out without penalty.³⁴ The elementary, art, and music curricula were also revised and a physical education for women curriculum and an English-library science curriculum were added to the Normal's offerings.³⁵ Both new curricula reflected the latest trends in public school education and allowed the Normal to maintain its premier position in meeting the needs and demands of primary and secondary schools for properly trained teachers.

³⁰Official Proceedings of State Board of Education, July 23, 1934, Bulletin 271 (T.H. Harris, 1934), 23. Cited hereafter as *State Board Proceedings*, Bulletin 271.

³¹Ibid., April 28, 1930, Bulletin 176 (T.H. Harris, 1930), 11-12; Combs, "Tison."

³²Newspaper clipping, Melrose Scrapbook, #69, 144, Melrose Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

³³Official Proceedings of State Board of Education, February 24, 1930, Bulletin 173 (T.H. Harris, 1930), 4; Combs, "Tison"; W.W. Tison to Ralph Combs, April 3, 1959, Rachal Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

³⁴Official Proceedings of State Board of Education, September 2, 1931, Bulletin 213 (T.H. Harris, 1931), 6-14. W.W. Tison to Ralph Combs, April 3, 1959, Rachal Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

³⁵Combs, "Tison"; W.W. Tison to Ralph Combs, April 3, 1959, Rachal Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; [The Normal Quarterly of the State Normal College]. *Announcements for the Forty-Sixth Year of the State Normal College. Catalog, 1930. Roster of Students and Graduates For Year 1929, XIX* (April 1930), 32, 34. Cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly*, 1930.

The adjustment of curricula and the raising of the academic standards of the teaching staff removed deficiencies in the college's operations which had been noted earlier by the American Association of Teachers' Colleges. As a result, in 1931 for the first time the State Normal was accredited unconditionally by the American Association. The college also maintained its membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, the American Council on Education, and the Southern Association of Teacher Training Institutions.³⁶ Affiliation with these national and regional agencies meant that the State Normal College still ranked among the best teacher training institutions in the nation despite the adversities of the depression.

In still another way, President Tison contributed to the academic luster of the State Normal. He fully supported the alumni's attempt to acquire a suitable building to house the Williamson Museum. Throughout its existence, the Normal had among its faculty many outstanding professors. One of the most noted and popular was George Williamson who joined the teaching staff in 1897 as professor of biology and physiology. In addition to his excellent teaching, Professor Williamson was an ardent collector of geological, archeological, and biological materials. He donated his nationally-recognized collection to the college where it formed the nucleus of a museum named in his honor. In 1932 Professor Williamson was retired as professor of biology emeritus and became the curator of the Williamson Museum.³⁷ After his retirement, the Alumni Association planned to honor him by erecting a building to house his collection. The association hoped to raise \$125 thousand from various sources for the construction of a building in a modified Indian and Spanish architecture which would contain an alumni reception room and a social hall for faculty and students as well as the museum. President Tison fully endorsed the project and on September 6, 1933, the State Board of Education approved it. Unfortunately contributions did not materialize as expected because of the depression so the building project was dropped and the museum continued to be housed in the old science building.³⁸

President Tison's involvement with the alumni museum project was one of his last major activities as president of the State Normal College. On February 23, 1934, the State Board of Education in an executive session elected A.A. Fredericks

³⁶Crew, "Northwestern State College," 48; W.W. Tison to Ralph Combs, April 3, 1959, Rachal Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

³⁷The Natchitoches Times, August 8, 1930, January 17, 1936; The Shreveport Times, August 8, 1934; newspaper clippings, Melrose Scrapbook, #69, 84, #72, 52, Melrose Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

³⁸Official Proceedings of State Board of Education, September 6, 1933, Bulletin 262 (T.H. Harris, 1933), 30-31; Combs, "Tison."

president of the college effective September 1, 1934. Actually the new president assumed his duties on August 1, 1934, with W. W. Tison taking a month's leave of absence. Except for a statement of Superintendent Harris "that he was thoroughly convinced that a change in the presidency of the Louisiana State Normal College was necessary," the board's proceedings provide no clue why Tison was replaced.³⁹ It appears, however, that Senator Huey P. Long and Superintendent Harris played major roles in the State Board's decision. *The Times Picayune* reported that differences had arisen between Senator Long and President Tison as early as the previous January. At that time, according to the newspaper, Senator Long had asked for Tison's resignation but when the Normal president refused, the matter was temporarily dropped.⁴⁰ The Natchitoches community came to the support of the Normal's beleaguered president. J. L. Bryan, a member of the executive committee of the Louisiana State Normal College, circulated a petition among prominent Natchitoches citizens. The petition read in part:

We have been in close touch with the school and its everyday life, and we wish to say without hesitation that Mr. Tison's administration as president of the College is a success.

He has continuously laid stress on the cultural as well as the academic and professional phases of education. He has wisely taken care of the finances during these stressful times, and he is known to be courteous, fair and impartial in his decisions.

Some fifty prominent business, professional, and political leaders, including Representative Leon Friedman and Senator A. A. Fredericks, signed the statement which was sent to the State Board.⁴¹ The demonstrated support of the Natchitoches community may well have saved President Tison from immediate removal.

However, President Tison's reprieve did not last long. When the State Board met on February 23, Senator Long was present although he wisely did not attend the afternoon executive session during which the Normal president was replaced. He later denied having anything to do with the State Board's action. Nevertheless, at the time he was named to the Normal presidency, A. A. Fredericks was a recognized Long backer in the State Senate.⁴² Obviously there was a serious split between Long and Tison which may have been based partially on the well-known Franklin D. Roosevelt-Long rivalry in national politics. On at least two occasions, President Tison had worked closely with the Roosevelt administration. In 1932 the State Normal had been selected as the Louisiana locale for a nationwide celebra-

³⁹Ibid., July 23, 1934, Bulletin 271, 23.

⁴⁰*The Times-Picayune*, July 24, 1934; *Morning Advocate*, July 24, 1934; *The Times Picayune*, undated clipping, Rachal Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁴¹Petition to the Honorable H. H. White, President, and Members of the State Board of Education, January 16, 1934, Rachal Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁴²*State Board Proceedings*, July 23, 1934, Bulletin 271, 11, 23; *The Times Picayune*, undated clipping, Melrose Scrapbook, #73, 24, Melrose Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

tion of the George Washington Bicentennial.⁴³ Also President Tison approved a college-sponsored ball honoring President Roosevelt's birthday, the proceeds going to the polio research project or March of Dimes.⁴⁴ How Senator Long viewed these actions is not known, but it can be assumed that they did not please him. On the other hand, some thought that Superintendent Harris was responsible for removing President Tison. According to one faculty member, S. M. Byrd, head of the English department, President Tison went to the board meeting expecting only routine business and "... was fired without warning." Byrd also felt that Superintendent Harris was "viciously against" Tison and that he had "created and controlled Fredericks."⁴⁵

Whatever the reasons for his removal, and they certainly seemed to be political, President Tison had served the Normal as an able administrator during five depression-ridden years. His contribution was maintaining and even raising the academic and professional standards of the college despite the political and economic pressures of the time. He may not have been as popular as his predecessor and successor, but his dedication to the Normal was just as great.⁴⁶

Albert Asa Fredericks was born February 22, 1891, at Clear Lake, Natchitoches Parish, to Nolbery and Emily Cannon (Bryant) Fredericks. His father, who homesteaded eighty acres, died when Albert was only two years old. The young boy helped his widowed mother on the farm while attending a one-room school which was in session only three months a year. After his mother's death when he was thirteen, Albert lived with various relatives and worked on farms and in sawmills and logging camps.⁴⁷ In the spring of 1911 he entered the Louisiana State Normal School finding employment in a local dairy to pay his school expenses. By the fall he obtained a second-grade teaching certificate by examination and left the Normal to become principal of a two-room school near Sharp, in Rapides Parish. The following summer, after attending Normal College again, he taught at Gorum in Natchitoches Parish. Later A. A. Fredericks felt that he did his best

⁴³*The Natchitoches Times*, March 11, 1932, March 25, 1932; W. W. Tison to Ralph Combs, April 3, 1959, Rachal Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁴⁴Laura Clare T. Harris to Marietta M. LeBreton, April 10, 1983, in possession of author.

⁴⁵S. M. Boyd to [?], n.d., McClung-Byrd Collection, folder 36, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana. Cited hereafter as A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U. Professor Byrd's objectivity may be questioned since he was dismissed by President Fredericks in August 1934.

⁴⁶After leaving the State Normal College, W. W. Tison became professor of chemistry at Louisiana State University for nineteen years, retiring in August 1953 as professor emeritus. He died at age eighty-four on November 30, 1967, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. "Faculty Spotlight," 10; *The Daily Reveille*, Louisiana State University, May 5, 1953; [Baton Rouge] *State Times*, November 30, 1967.

⁴⁷Marjorie May Fredericks, Biography of Albert A. Fredericks, February, 1937, 1, Albert A. Fredericks Papers, uncatalogued collection of Fredericks's personal papers, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana. Cited hereafter as uncatalogued Fredericks Papers, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; Crew, "Northwestern State College," 53.

teaching at Sharp which had only six grades.⁴⁸ In September 1912 Albert Fredericks entered Louisiana State University where he pursued a degree in agriculture. Again, he defrayed his expenses by working in the Louisiana Creamery, a part of the university's operation. While at Louisiana State University, he accepted a bid to a national fraternity, Lambda Chi Alpha, and later served as manager of the fraternity house where he received his first business training. In 1917 he graduated with a bachelor of science degree in agriculture.⁴⁹

After graduation Albert Fredericks joined the Cooperative Extension Service, first as a farm demonstration agent for East and West Feliciana parishes and then as state agent for dairying. After two years of state service, he became manager of the Farmers' Cooperative Creamery in Shreveport in 1919. A short while later he resigned to become director of rural education at the Louisiana State Normal College.⁵⁰ For thirteen years A.A. Fredericks served in that position, later designated as head of the department of agriculture, during which time he developed an expanded farming operation, an outstanding herd of dairy cattle, impressive flocks of fowl and herds of swine, and a successful college creamery. He instituted a policy of giving male calves to local farmers to build up their herds, and in 1929 established a Farmers' Creamery at the Normal which provided employment for boys working their way through college, supplied the Normal dining hall with fresh dairy products, and provided farmers with a cash income for their cream. To further aid the project, Mr. Fredericks established cream routes which eliminated the necessity of the farmers bringing their own cream to Natchitoches.⁵¹ While directing the Normal's agricultural operations, A.A. Fredericks returned to Louisiana State University for graduate work, receiving a master of science degree in 1926.⁵² He also developed short courses for area farmers and sponsored agricultural meetings at the Normal. On April 1, 1931, the New Jersey Cattle Club held its convention at the college with three thousand farmers in attendance. Professor C.H. Staples of Louisiana State University labeled Mr. Fredericks "the human dynamo of the meeting."⁵³

Not content with his numerous activities at the Normal, A.A. Fredericks joined a variety of civic and fraternal organizations in Natchitoches and participated enthusiastically in many civic projects such as the establishment of the Federal Fish Hatchery. In 1932 he decided to enter state politics by announcing his candi-

⁴⁸Marjorie May Fredericks, Biography of Albert A. Fredericks, February, 1937, 1, uncatalogued Fredericks Papers, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; Emily Fredericks Wofford to Mr. Fletcher, n.d., *ibid.*

⁴⁹Marjorie May Fredericks, Biography of Albert A. Fredericks, February, 1937, 1-2, uncatalogued Fredericks Papers, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; Crew, "Northwestern State College," 53-54.

⁵⁰Marjorie May Fredericks, Biography of Albert A. Fredericks, February, 1937, 2, uncatalogued Fredericks Papers, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁵¹*Ibid.*; *The Natchitoches Times*, March 15, 1929.

⁵²*The Natchitoches Times*, July 27, 1934.

⁵³Marjorie May Fredericks, Biography of Albert A. Fredericks, February, 1937, 3, uncatalogued Fredericks Papers, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *The Natchitoches Times*, February 1, 1929.

dacy for senator of the twenty-third district. As a teacher Mr. Fredericks felt that there should be educators as well as other professional and businessmen in politics.⁵⁴ Winning over two opponents, he represented Red River and Natchitoches parishes in Baton Rouge for the next sixteen years as a strong pro-Long senator. Upon being named president of the State Normal, August 1, 1934, A.A. Fredericks immediately telegraphed his resignation as state senator to Governor O.K. Allen but it was not accepted.⁵⁵ Thus from 1934 to 1941 he enjoyed the unique position of serving both as state senator and college president.

Albert A. Fredericks held a populist philosophy of education. He believed that all young people, regardless of their social or economic status, should have the opportunity of attending college. After his retirement he commented on the value of universal education, "It is clear that education has become essential not for just some of our people but for all of our people."⁵⁶ As president, Mr. Fredericks spent many hours finding jobs for students so they could work their way through college. In dealing with students, he was "a most democratic educator who suggests but does not dictate, leads but does not drive, and above all inspires industry in young people and the love of it."⁵⁷ In a similar vein, he once remarked to a friend, "I am trying to make these boys and girls learn to love their work and the profession, whatever it is, they intend to follow."⁵⁸ He also believed in student participation in all phases of campus life and even regarded student demonstrations as beneficial to all involved. In speaking of Normal students after his retirement from the field of education, Mr. Fredericks commented:

In my day we could not deal with students in a high-handed way. You demanded to have some say about the management of the college and concessions were made and for the benefit of all. Students helped make rules and regulations and students took part in enforcing the rules and regulations. They would ship students and I would readmit them. Yes, back in your days there was an open season on college professors and the president and we had to defend ourselves from all sides. No, I am not alarmed at student demonstrations and riots.⁵⁹

⁵⁴Marjorie May Fredericks, Biography of Albert A. Fredericks, February, 1937, 3-4, uncatalogued Fredericks Papers, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁵⁵John Tarver, "Brother Square-Toes: Albert Fredericks' Encounter With Academic Freedom, 1934-1941" (M.A. thesis, Northwestern State University, 1979), 20, 32; cited hereafter as Tarver, "Brother Square-Toes."

⁵⁶Draft of Speech by Albert A. Fredericks, n.d., uncatalogued Fredericks Papers, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁵⁷Marjorie May Fredericks, Biography of Albert A. Fredericks, February, 1937, 10, uncatalogued Fredericks Papers, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*

⁵⁹Draft of speech by Albert A. Fredericks, n.d., *ibid.*

Continuing on, he lamented that the State Board of Education in the 1930s was controlled by corporation lawyers representing big business who did not believe "... students should participate in decisions which affected them. All they had to do was listen and take what the faculty dished out."⁶⁰

In light of his liberal views on education and his extraordinary sense of humor, it is not surprising that A.A. Fredericks was very popular with the Normal students. His sense of humor enveloped himself as well as conditions and people around him. He often described his early years by saying, "I grew up like a grapevine without trimming, pruning, spraying, or fertilization."⁶¹ Although humble himself, others heaped praise on him. *The Natchitoches Times* reported that Mr. Fredericks took over the administration of the Normal College "amid tumultuous ovation by students and faculty." The local newspaper continued, "That the selection of Mr. Fredericks met with popular approval, there can be no doubt; he has always been a great favorite among the people of Natchitoches and the same qualities that have endeared him to the townspeople made him popular with the students."⁶² *The Current Sauce* commented, "If the acclaim of the faculty and students is to be used as a criterion of his popularity, then the new president is headed for an administration that augurs well for the Teachers' College. . . ."⁶³ *The Shreveport Journal* noted that "a man of large caliber" was needed as president to maintain the Normal's excellent standing and work. "Such a man, beyond question, is Dr. Fredericks. . . . He has been connected actively with the Normal College for years, is himself a teacher of recognized and proven ability, and is declared by all who know him to be temperamentally and in all other ways splendidly qualified."⁶⁴

August 1, 1934, was a day of great excitement and whirlwind activity when A.A. Fredericks was installed as seventh president of the State Normal College. During the morning assembly the students and faculty gave the incoming president a standing ovation. In a humble but expectant tone, President Fredericks responded to their warm welcome by saying, "I appreciate the confidence you place in me. . . . I am certain that we are going to get along together. We may make mistakes from time to time but we shall always endeavor to come together and rectify them."⁶⁵ To the delight of the students the rest of the day was proclaimed a holiday. That night President Fredericks presided over the summer term graduation exercises while former president W.W. Tison read the honor roll and introduced the four-year honor student. Then, grateful for a place on the graduation program,

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹[Marjorie May Fredericks] to L.C. Lee, January 10, 1965, *ibid.*; A.A. Fredericks to A.G. Hammett, July 2, 1963, *ibid.*

⁶²*The Natchitoches Times*, August 3, 1934.

⁶³*Current Sauce*, September 28, 1934.

⁶⁴*The Shreveport Journal*, August 2, 1934, quoted in *The Natchitoches Times*, August 10, 1934.

⁶⁵*The Natchitoches Times*, August 3, 1934; *The Shreveport Journal*, August 2, 1934, quoted in *The Natchitoches Times*, August 10, 1934.

he declared, "I am confident of the Normal's future under his [Fredericks's] leadership."⁶⁶

The euphoria of the Normal faculty, however, did not last long. Among rumors of a widespread shakeup, on August 8, President Fredericks, with the approval of the Normal executive council, recommended the dismissal of six faculty members: S.M. Byrd, head of the English department, Christian Jordan, professor of piano and director of the School of Music, Ira F. Heald, associate professor of education, Valona Brewer, assistant professor of violin, Kate Perkins, assistant professor of history and English, and R.C. Childs, fifth-grade critic teacher. A few weeks later the State Board of Education approved his recommendations. At the same time he hired six new faculty members: W.J. Avery, assistant professor of education, John O. Pettiss, professor of elementary education, Rivers Nesom, instructor of agriculture and assistant coach of men's athletics, Addie Byrd, instructor of commerce, Charles Cunningham, instructor of English, and Eugene Watson, instructor of English. Additionally, Harry H. Turpin was named head football coach replacing H. Lee Prather who remained head basketball coach. Ralph L. Ropp was made director of publicity.⁶⁷ Obviously, Mr. Fredericks dismissed those who had worked closely with his predecessor and replaced them with people loyal to himself. No one challenged the new president's actions in 1934, but some faculty members felt so insecure that the following February President Fredericks assured them that they were safe in their positions.⁶⁸ Years later the dismissal of another faculty member would cause President Fredericks much distress. Meanwhile, once again the Normal faculty became more highly qualified through graduate study. By 1941, ninety percent of the faculty held graduate degrees, up from 72 percent in 1934.⁶⁹

Almost immediately upon taking office, President Fredericks indicated the major thrust of his administration — a massive building and campus improvement program financed by federal, state, and parish funding. In October 1934 he announced that the Normal had been granted twenty-five thousand dollars from the Federal Emergency Relief Administration for the landscaping of the campus.⁷⁰ The next month he made public plans for a five hundred thousand dollar expansion program including a new power plant, fine arts building, and four dormitories.⁷¹ Before any action could be taken, in January 1935, fire destroyed two

⁶⁶*The Natchitoches Times*, August 3, 1934.

⁶⁷*The Shreveport Times*, August 22, 1934; *The Natchitoches Times*, August 24, 1934; undated newspaper clipping, Melrose Scrapbook #72, 116, Melrose Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *Official Proceedings of the State Board of Education*, October 17, 1934, Bulletin 282 (T.H. Harris, 1934), 13; Tarver, "Brother Square-Toes," 31.

⁶⁸A.A. Fredericks to Louisiana State Normal College faculty, February 21, 1935, Albert A. Fredericks Papers, University Archives, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana. Cited hereafter as Fredericks Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁶⁹"Summary Report of the Administration of Albert A. Fredericks," *ibid.*; Crew, "Northwestern State College," 58.

⁷⁰*Current Sauce*, October 11, 1934.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, November 28, 1934.



Russell Library (formerly Richard W. Leche Library)

dormitories leaving a number of girls homeless. Although there were no deaths or injuries among the dorm residents, the girls lost their clothing and food. The people of Natchitoches responded to the emergency by donating items to replace those lost by the students while individuals and organizations on campus gave money to a relief fund. President Fredericks seized the opportunity to delineate the building needs of the Normal and to declare the library and fine arts buildings fire hazards needing replacement. Governor O.K. Allen, Superintendent Harris, local legislators, and citizens toured the fire scene and all agreed that the library was a fire trap which should be replaced and that the college needed an expanded power plant. The governor announced that he was recommending that the Board of Liquidation approve a two hundred thousand dollar building program for the college.⁷² After nearly a year's delay, the governor made good his commitment and the Board of Liquidation approved two hundred thousand dollars for improvements at the Normal.⁷³ Demonstrating a special interest in the Normal, perhaps because he attended there as a youth, the governor promised that if more funding was necessary for the library and power plant, it would be made available. Ultimately the State Board approved \$285 thousand with \$150 thousand dedicated to the library and \$135 thousand to the power plant.⁷⁴

⁷²Ibid., January 24, 1935; *The Natchitoches Times*, January 18, 1935; Minutes, Board of Administrators, January 26, 1935, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁷³*The Natchitoches Times*, December 20, 1935; Minutes, Board of Administrators, January 6, 1936, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁷⁴*Current Sauce*, January 16, 1936; Minutes, Board of Administrators, January 6, 1936; A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

In March 1936 work began on the new library, a modified Tudor-gothic building of red brick consisting of a basement, first floor, and semi-attic. The reading room on the first floor accommodated three hundred students at one time. Situated across from Caldwell Hall, the new library filled the open side of the quadrangle of buildings formed by Caldwell Hall, Warren Easton, and the science building.⁷⁵ Although President Fredericks wanted to name the library building after his friend and mentor, Superintendent T.H. Harris, the governor at the time of the building's completion insisted that it be named for him. President Fredericks bowed to political reality and the Normal library became the Richard W. Leche Library. Governor Leche proudly attended the dedication ceremonies where he conferred degrees and certificates on 250 Normal graduates from the library steps in May, 1937.⁷⁶

President Fredericks's improvement program for 1936 was not yet complete. He sought and obtained funds for the renovation and addition of a south wing to Warren Easton Hall. Turning to federal relief programs, he received thirty-seven thousand dollars from the Works Progress Administration for the renovation of almost every building on campus, the rebuilding of sidewalks, and the connection of the college's sewage system with the city of Natchitoches.⁷⁷

President Fredericks's 1936 building program was just the first step in a mammoth physical improvement program that transformed the Normal facilities into a modernized physical plant. In October 1937 A.A. Fredericks requested an appropriation of more than one million dollars for the Normal. Among the buildings he proposed were two women's dormitories, a men's dormitory, a men's gym-

⁷⁵*Current Sauce*, March 19, 1936.

⁷⁶Ibid., May 20, 1937; Tarver, "Brother Square-Toes," 44-45. The construction of the Normal library, power plant, and addition to Warren Easton became involved in the 1939 investigation of the Louisiana scandals. In September 1939 F.S. Shattuck, Supervisor of Public Funds, presented a report to Governor Earl K. Long concerning the construction of the Normal buildings. Mr. Shattuck concluded that no contracts were awarded for the construction of the buildings, in some cases no bids were required, and that the contractors, Caldwell Brothers and Hart, made excessive profits — 28.65 percent on the library, 84.62 percent on the power plant, and 106.29 percent on Warren Easton. The total costs of the projects were \$203,672.59 for the library, \$362,234.13 for the power house, and \$66,895.57 for Warren Easton. The contractors also charged fifteen thousand for work never done on laying a steam line. This sum was refunded to the State Normal College by Caldwell Brothers and Hart. The projects' architects, Weiss, Dreyfous, and Seiferth, also collected fees on the overcharges. When Horace R. Brown, building supervisor for the State Board of Education, substantiated Shattuck's report, Superintendent Harris declared, "My opinion is that we are thoroughly warranted in believing graft and stealing were practiced in the erection of the three buildings. . . ." The contractors later made restitution to the state for the overcharges. After the resignation of Governor Leche in wake of the scandals, his name was removed from the Normal library building. *Official Proceedings of the State Board of Education*, September 21, 1939, Bulletin 421 (T.H. Harris, 1939), 3-4; *ibid.*, October 17, 1939, Bulletin 424 (T.H. Harris, 1939), 14, 141-50; *ibid.*, October 30, 1939, Bulletin 425 (T.H. Harris, 1939), 4-14; *ibid.*, November 14, 1939, Bulletin 427 (T.H. Harris, 1939), 18; *ibid.*, March 12, 1940, Bulletin 431 (T.H. Harris, 1940), 5.

⁷⁷*Current Sauce*, February 13, 1936. On WPA projects, the federal government contributed forty-five cents on the dollar and the state fifty-five cents.

Northwestern State University

nasium, an auditorium and fine arts building, a concrete stadium, and a refrigeration plant.⁷⁸ A few weeks later the finance committee of the State Board of Education approved a building fund of \$1.5 million for the years 1938-1940 and a maintenance appropriation of \$450 thousand annually for the Normal.⁷⁹ President Fredericks immediately announced that \$424 thousand would be spent on a fine arts building, \$256 thousand on two women's dormitories each with forty-five rooms and 111 beds, and two hundred thousand dollars for a men's dormitory with seventy rooms and 194 beds.⁸⁰ Before 1938 ended, the Normal enjoyed an even greater allocation of capital outlay funds for the 1938-1940 biennium. The whopping sum of \$1,927,272 in state and federal PWA funds was allocated for physical improvements at the State Normal.⁸¹ With these funds, the college realized seven new buildings in 1939, including a six-thousand-seat concrete stadium, an athletic dormitory (Caspari Hall), a high school (financed by the Natchitoches Parish school board), a trade school (also financed by the Natchitoches Parish school board), a women's dormitory (Varnado), a new infirmary, and a power plant. Four additional buildings were under construction: a men's gymnasium, a fine arts building, a student center, and a natatorium.⁸²



Old Fine Arts Building

⁷⁸*The Current Sauce*, October 28, 1937.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, December 2, 1937.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, April 21, 1938.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, October 6, 1938.

⁸²*Ibid.*, January 11, 1940. During 1938 and 1939 President Fredericks also purchased 124.24 acres of land adjoining the State Normal for \$5,884.60. The new acquisitions rounded out the campus site and provided needed pasturage and land for a pig farm. He also leased a ten-acre plot for ninety-nine years to the Natchitoches Parish School Board for the site of the new high school and trade school. Record of Land Purchases, 1938-1939, Fredericks Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *The Current Sauce*, January 28, 1937.

The Light of a New Day



New Fine Arts Building



Old Girls Dorm



Varnado Hall



Caspari Hall

Students arriving on campus in the fall of 1940 were greeted with the opening of the final four major buildings constructed during the Fredericks administration. Outstanding among these structures was a fine arts building housing a 750-seat auditorium and a three hundred-seat Little Theatre as well as offices and technical rooms. Most popular among the students was a new student center which contained a large social room, a cafe, the college post office, a private dining room, men's and women's smokers, and a game room. To the rear of the student center was the newly-constructed natatorium and across campus a new home economics cottage.⁸³ By that time Fredericks was nearing the end of his administration, and, almost as if he were attempting to defend his tenure, he prepared a summary report of his years as president. Much of the report dealt with the physical growth of the Louisiana State Normal College from 1934 to 1941. Noting that the state of Louisiana, the parish of Natchitoches, and the federal government had spent \$4,166,150.52 for land, buildings, equipment, and improvements at the Normal between 1934 and 1941 whereas in the previous fifty years Louisiana and Natchitoches Parish had spent only \$1,133,157.23 for the same purposes, the summary detailed the physical plant improvements totaling \$3,783,200.15. Some of the projects were sponsored and financed solely by the state, others sponsored by the state and financed by the state and federal governments, and still others financed largely through federal agencies such as the PWA, CWA, ERA, WPA, and NYA. Although President Fredericks realized that he had taken care of the major physical needs of the State Normal for years to come, he pragmatically knew that any growing institution would have additional needs and he was already planning future plant improvements.⁸⁴ However, he never saw these plans materialize for in April 1941 he was replaced as president of the State Normal.

While engaged in his highly successful building program, President Fredericks initiated a comprehensive project of curricula study and improvement at the State Normal. Ten new curricula were added to the already existing fourteen courses of study. Many new courses were offered to meet the changing needs and interests of the Normal students. Typical of the new offerings was a course which attracted immediate student interest and demonstrated President Fredericks's ingenuity. The Normal owned some mules which were no longer useful as beasts of burden so President Fredericks traded them for some horses. With a stable of seven of the newly-acquired ponies, a course in horseback riding was instituted under the direction of Mrs. Thelma Kyser.⁸⁵ Other new offerings were broad cultural courses, a

⁸³*The Current Sauce*, September 26, 1940.

⁸⁴"Summary Report of the Administration of Albert A. Fredericks," Fredericks Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*; *The Current Sauce*, November 28, 1934, May 5, 1939.

new plan of student teaching, a liberal arts course, vocational courses in agriculture, commerce, and home economics, and trade courses in the new campus trade school.⁸⁶

All existing curricula were revised with many courses being completely reorganized. The purpose of the curricula revision was two-fold. First, all courses had to be reorganized to fit into a semester plan which was adopted in the fall of 1939. Instead of three twelve-week quarters and a nine-week summer school, the college instituted a scholastic year of two eighteen-week semesters and a nine-week summer school. Under both plans, classes were held six days a week. The second reason for the curricula reorganization was to provide a broad general education for all students during the first two years which would serve as an adequate foundation for the specialized courses of the junior and senior years. Also through the reorganization many duplications of courses were eliminated.⁸⁷

In addition to regular credit courses, the State Normal under A.A. Fredericks sponsored a series of meetings for high school principals, parish superintendents, and supervisors. These meetings enabled the college to keep in close contact with the public school systems, upgraded participating educational personnel, and improved instruction in the secondary schools. Other college-sponsored meetings included French festivals, a commerce conference, 4-H meetings, high school rallies, college and high school debate tournaments, home economics conferences, Louisiana Library Commission meetings, and music festivals.⁸⁸ Each of these brought prospective students and educational personnel to the campus, thus publicizing the work of the Normal. For example, the four-day musicfest of 1941 was the largest state music festival ever held in Louisiana. Approximately four thousand students from ninety-four Louisiana schools participated in the activities on campus.⁸⁹

The academic changes made at the Normal during President Fredericks's tenure, nevertheless, did not protect the institution from several investigations by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools and its ultimate loss of accreditation. As early as March 1935 a committee of the Southern Association

⁸⁶The curricula during the Fredericks's years were: agriculture, art, biology, business administration, chemistry, commercial education, English, health and physical education for men, health and physical education for women, home economics, language, liberal arts, library, mathematics, physics, pre-medical, primary, secretarial science, social studies, speech, upper elementary, music vocal, and music instrumental. "Summary Report of the Administration of Albert A. Fredericks," Fredericks Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *The Current Sauce*, May 5, 1939.

⁸⁷"Summary Report of the Administration of Albert A. Fredericks," Fredericks Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *The Current Sauce*, January 11, 1940; [*The Normal Quarterly of the State Normal College*]. *Announcements for the Fifty-fifth Year of the Louisiana State Normal College. Catalog, 1939. Roster of Students and Graduates For Year 1938*, XXVIII (April 1939); cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly*, 1939.

⁸⁸"Summary Report of the Administration of Albert A. Fredericks," Fredericks Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁸⁹*The Current Sauce*, March 27, 1941.

visited the Normal to investigate charges that Senator Long was running the college. President Fredericks, while welcoming the inquiry, blamed it on persons who were opposed to his efforts to improve the faculty and practice economy.⁹⁰ Someone may have complained of the firing of six faculty members a few months earlier. Whatever the reason for the investigation, the committee exonerated the Normal of the political charge but placed it on a year's probation for academic weakness revealed by the committee's study of student examination papers. Undoubtedly with a sigh of relief, President Fredericks declared that the Southern Association's study of the Normal was routine and that the correction of the academic weaknesses cited by the association would result in a higher academic standing for the college.⁹¹ The Southern Association conducted a three-year inquiry before finally giving the Normal a top rating in April 1938.⁹²

Charges of political meddling in the State Normal's affairs, however, would not die even though Huey Long was assassinated in September 1935. Now it was Governor Richard W. Leche who was using state jobs to favor his friends and to punish his administration's foes. In 1939 the Southern Association was again asked to investigate the college after Linus A. Sims, a Normal professor, charged he had been fired for political reasons. A graduate and professor at Centenary College in Shreveport, Mr. Sims went to Hammond about 1920 as a high school teacher and later principal. He was named the first president of Southeastern Louisiana College but was removed from that office in 1933 and given a teacher's job at the State Normal. Mr. Sims was also an ordained Methodist minister who dabbled in politics. In 1938 he actively campaigned for James H. Morrison who was running for Congress in the Sixth District (Florida Parishes) against a Leche-supported candidate. His son, Joe Arthur Sims, became Morrison's campaign manager. Governor Leche decided to pressure the elder Sims to quit the Morrison campaign through President Fredericks who warned Mr. Sims that his son's role in the congressional campaign concerned the governor. Mr. Sims resisted the pressure and in August 1938 President Fredericks fired the recalcitrant professor.⁹³

Linus Sims immediately went to the newspapers with a detailed account of his dismissal. According to his version, the Normal President warned "... if you have any regard for your job, you will have Joe Arthur get out of it [the campaign] at once. He should have more respect for you than to get mixed up in politics." Then, he continued, "I'll get fired if I don't fire you."⁹⁴ When Mr. Sims asked A.A. Fred-

⁹⁰*Current Sauce*, December 20, 1934.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, December 19, 1935. The student newspaper in an editorial denied political interference at the college stating, "There is no political dictation of the affairs of the LSNC unless political dictation means creation of an atmosphere in which all of us can be happy. If this be political control, we have no complaint." *Current Sauce*, December 20, 1934.

⁹²*Ibid.*, April 7, 1938.

⁹³Tarver, "Brother Square-Toes," 50-51.

⁹⁴*The Times Picayune*, August 23, 1938; August 30, 1938.

ericks what the Southern Association's reaction would be, he replied, "We don't care what the Southern Association says, . . . you should know that the school people of Louisiana do not run the schools. They are run by the politicians and they don't know anything about the Southern Association and they don't give a damn about it — and if they knew we were members they would make us get out."⁹⁵

Mr. Fredericks's account of the incident differed significantly from that of the released professor. Denying Mr. Sims's version of the conversation, President Fredericks at first admitted that the professor "was let go because he continued participating in politics over in Hammond." After the Southern Association took up the issue, President Fredericks changed his story and offered his letter of dismissal to Mr. Sims as the explanation for his action. It read:

August 11, 1938

Mr. L.A. Sims
Natchitoches, Louisiana

Dear Mr. Sims:

Several weeks ago I called you into my office and notified you that I had recommended your reemployment for the school year of 1938-39. As I told you during this conference, this recommendation was made in spite of the fact that the dean of the college and the principal of the elementary school had reported that your work during the year had not been entirely satisfactory and in spite of the additional fact that your attitude toward both the college officials and the entire administration of the college had caused me some embarrassment on several occasions.

I made this concession in your case because I had hoped that your work and attitude would improve and also because you are nearing the retirement age.

You will recall my specific advice upon that occasion that you refrain from activities that would in any way handicap me in my efforts to improve the State Normal college or that would do harm to the school's reputation and development. You have disregarded my instructions and have continued your ill-advised activities in direct opposition to them.

In view of the facts of incompetence and insubordination, I feel that you cannot longer render a service here and am therefore recommending to the State Board of Education your immediate dismissal from the faculty of the Louisiana State Normal College.

Very truly yours,
A.A. Fredericks
President⁹⁶

⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶Official Proceedings of State Board of Education, August 16, 1938, Bulletin 381 (T.H. Harris, 1938), 17.

Undoubtedly, Mr. Sims's political activities were considered insubordination and the Leche administration wanted him out, leaving A.A. Fredericks little choice in the matter. The State Board of Education, like the Normal president, heeded Governor Leche's wishes, and approved the firing of L.A. Sims.⁹⁷ Superintendent Harris declared, "The report that he was fired for insubordination and inefficiency is correct."⁹⁸ Meanwhile, Mr. Sims began denouncing the Leche administration in a series of speaking engagements throughout the state which were well covered by the press. On the basis of a newly-adopted State Board resolution on tenure, he appealed to the board to honor his contract for 1938-39 or pay him his salary for that year.⁹⁹

Linus Sims also filed a complaint concerning political control of the State Normal administration with the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools which began another lengthy investigation. It resulted in the college's losing its accreditation. The Southern Association's inquiry was ill-timed for A.A. Fredericks who was running for re-election to the state senate and also for Earl K. Long who was campaigning for governor. To ward off the association's investigation, President Fredericks, in reply to his questions, explained to O.C. Carmichael, chairman of the association's Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, that Mr. Sims was fired for ineffective work and insubordination when he "went to the center of political activities, and became actively involved in fighting the State Administration." Ironically, President Fredericks also stated, "I tried to make it clear also that his political activity in itself was not of any great importance, but his failure to consider the welfare of the college and to work happily as a member of our staff, as well as his inability to do satisfactory work here, forced me to recommend his dismissal."¹⁰⁰ Mr. Carmichael, however, could not understand why, if his work had been so poor, Mr. Sims was hired in the spring for the upcoming academic year and then suddenly released shortly before the fall term. He felt that only gross insubordination would justify dismissing a teacher so late in the summer. Not satisfied with President Fredericks's explanation, the Southern Association removed the Normal from its approved list.¹⁰¹

The Southern Association's decision not to accredit the State Normal brought an angry response from H.H. White, president of the State Board of Education, and a denial of the importance of the association's action by A.A. Fredericks. President White felt that the association's action "was unnecessarily prompt and severe and rendered on insufficient evidence." He also believed that the Southern

⁹⁷Ibid., April 18, 1939, Bulletin 408 (T.H. Harris, 1939), 48-49; cited hereafter as *State Board Proceedings*, Bulletin 408.

⁹⁸*The Times Picayune*, August 23, 1938.

⁹⁹Official Proceedings of State Board of Education, March 14, 1939, Bulletin 405 (T.H. Harris, 1939), 40-41.

¹⁰⁰*State Board Proceedings*, Bulletin 408, 55.

¹⁰¹Ibid., 58, 61.

Association acted not only on the evidence presented to it "but by a preconceived conclusion that Louisiana educational policy was dictated by sinister political influences." Declaring that there was "a minimum of politics" in public education, Mr. White questioned the advisability of belonging to the association. "I can see many advantages in continuing membership in the Association. I approve heartily of high scholastic standards but when the Association undertakes to decide who may be employed and who discharged I feel its powers should be questioned."¹⁰²

Meanwhile President Fredericks began a campaign to convince the general public and particularly Normal students that Mr. Sims was fired for just reasons and that the loss of accreditation did no harm to the standing of the college. He gave a statement to the press denying that Professor Sims was fired because of his son's political activities but did admit that the teacher's own political activities were considered insubordination and were one of the reasons for his dismissal. He also released to the press his letter to Mr. Sims firing him.¹⁰³ After the Normal lost its accreditation, President Fredericks gave the press an explanation of the incident. "The State Normal was dropped from the rolls of this so-called accrediting association because I, as its administrative head, refused to submit to its dictation with regard to the hiring and firing of teachers at the institution." He also charged that the Southern Association was dominated by the executives of privately-endowed colleges who could not adequately judge a teachers' college.¹⁰⁴ Undoubtedly at the urging of President Fredericks, in April 1939 the board of directors of the Alumni Association in a letter to the Normal's graduates and former students reviewed the relationship between the Southern Association and the State Normal since December 1935. The Alumni report upheld President Fredericks's action noting that the loss of accreditation would not endanger the status of Normal graduates since teacher certification was a state function not affected in any way by an outside accrediting agency. Furthermore, the Alumni Association pointed out that the Normal had an A-1 rating with the American Association of Teachers' Colleges.¹⁰⁵ To allay student fears, the *Current Sauce* assured them that President Fredericks's withdrawal of the Normal from the Southern Association reflected no discredit on the college scholastically. According to the student newspaper, the only point at issue was the president's right to dismiss a member of his staff.¹⁰⁶

Despite all the denials, the loss of accreditation was a blow to the State Normal and its president. It was one of a number of problems suddenly facing President Fredericks. Without warning, in October 1939 the State Board discussed a resolution prohibiting its employees from engaging "in local or State politics, and the

¹⁰²Ibid., 64-65.

¹⁰³*The Natchitoches Times*, August 26, 1938.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., March 31, 1939.

¹⁰⁵*The Normal Alumni Columns*, 1 (March 1939), 22-23.

¹⁰⁶*Current Sauce* editorial quoted in *The Natchitoches Times*, April 14, 1939; *Current Sauce*, May 5, 1939.

acceptance of a political office by any such person shall be cause for dismissal." In speaking in favor of the resolution, Superintendent Harris declared that college presidents and employees "should not serve in the Legislature. They are classed as politicians and as part of the political machine, and then, too, they have large institutions to administer which takes up all of their time. I think the argument is in favor of their not being in the Legislature. . . ."¹⁰⁷ Although the resolution was tabled, A.A. Fredericks commented that eight years ago and again four years ago it was all right for him to be a member of the legislature and that he planned again to be a candidate from his senatorial district.¹⁰⁸ Although he won re-election, his gubernatorial candidate, Earl K. Long, lost to the reform-minded Sam H. Jones.

After returning to Natchitoches, less than a week later, President Fredericks was informed by Dr. C.C. Henson, director of the Isidore Newman School in New Orleans and State Board member, of the impending visit to the Normal of a board committee directed to study the relationship between the state colleges and the Southern Association. The committee was accompanied by Dr. M.C. Huntley, Executive Secretary of the association. It was also expected that Dr. Huntley would be impressed by the State Normal and would explain the conditions under which the college would be re-admitted to the Southern Association. On November 20, 1939, the group met at the Normal and Dr. Huntley was duly impressed by the physical plant and the friendliness of President Fredericks with his students. However, the Normal was not restored to membership in the association and President Fredericks, in a moment of frustration, bitterly denounced L.A. Sims for taking credit for the college losing its accreditation in his campaign speeches.¹⁰⁹

Within a year the new Jones administration's influence on education was clearly visible. On August 2, 1940, the State Board of Education elected the presidents of seven state institutions, including the Normal, as acting presidents for the ensuing year. In the meantime, the Education Committee of the State Board was to investigate every institution and make recommendations regarding the employment of permanent presidents.¹¹⁰ In December 1940 a three-person investigation committee of State Board members, chaired by Mrs. Eleanore Meade, visited the Normal and issued a highly complimentary report on the physical plant, the spirit of cooperation among students, faculty, and administration, and the work of President Fredericks. "The local committee has knowledge and enthusiasm for both the institution and for the president, whom they credit with the advancement of the college." "The president, though he does not possess a doctorate, seems to have the

¹⁰⁷*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, October 17, 1939, Bulletin 424 (T.H. Harris, 1939), 43-45.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., 45.

¹⁰⁹C.C. Henson to A.A. Fredericks, October 23, 1939; Eleanore H. Meade to A.A. Fredericks, November 24, 1939; A.A. Fredericks to Eleanore H. Meade, November 28, 1939, Fredericks Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹¹⁰John E. Cox to A.A. Fredericks, August 5, 1940, *ibid.*

proper educational qualifications and is an excellent administrator." Fifteen local citizens testified before the committee that they were satisfied with the conduct of the school and the Student Council endorsed the retention of President Fredericks.¹¹¹

The State Board inquiry of 1940 was only one of two investigations the State Normal college underwent that year. The Jones administration hired E.O. Griffenhagen, a management and governmental consultant from Chicago, to study the operations of the state's various agencies. Governor Jones planned to reform the state's bureaucracy by increasing the efficiency of some agencies and by eliminating others altogether. In 1940 representatives of the Griffenhagen firm visited the Normal to conduct interviews, collect information, and personally observe the college's operation. Much of their data came from personnel description cards which the Normal employees filled out at the end of the 1939-40 school year. The result of the Griffenhagen study was a 114-page report which covered all phases of the college's operations from administration to student activities. It contained 108 specific recommendations affecting all departments and activities of the Normal.¹¹² President Fredericks was given the opportunity to prepare a memorandum indicating which recommendations were valid and which were not. For those considered unacceptable, he was to present supporting evidence nullifying their validity. Believing that the purpose of the report was to reduce the cost of operation at the Normal, President Fredericks carefully prepared a sixty-one page memorandum based on faculty input, agreeing with some recommendations and rejecting others.¹¹³

The Griffenhagen report was exhaustive and in many ways critical of the Normal. It pointed out that the enrollment of the college had shown a sudden decrease and could be expected to continue to decline, that the institution should never have been built in Natchitoches in the first place, that the school was no longer strictly a normal college and its name should be changed to reflect the diversified offerings, that the college spent too much money recruiting students many of whom were not prepared for higher education, and that the president often acted independently of the State Board of Education and was improperly involved in state politics as a senator. The report also denounced President Fredericks for causing the Normal to lose its accreditation by firing a professor for political reasons.¹¹⁴

¹¹¹*Current Sauce*, January 16, 1941. Earlier the financial records of the Normal had been examined in the wake of the Louisiana scandals. President Fredericks had cooperated with the investigation of irregularities in the construction of Normal buildings under Governor Leche and all the books and other records were found in good order. Tarver, "Brother Square-Toes," 69; *The Natchitoches Times*, September 29, 1939.

¹¹²[E.O. Griffenhagen], "Survey, Report, and Recommendations, Louisiana State Normal College," n.d.; cited hereafter as Griffenhagen, "Survey."

¹¹³"Memoranda On Summary of Recommendations," Louisiana State Normal College, Report 6 (A.A. Fredericks, March 1941); cited hereafter as Fredericks, "Memoranda."

¹¹⁴Griffenhagen, "Survey," 13-19.

The Normal president refuted the charges one by one, sometimes with sarcasm but more often with anger.¹¹⁵ Nevertheless, he must have realized the inevitable—he would not be president of the State Normal much longer. He had earlier sent a letter resigning from the state senate to Governor Jones, but upon realizing his days at the Normal were numbered, he withdrew his resignation and decided to remain in the political arena.¹¹⁶

In January 1941 the State Board of Education decided to make its selection of permanent college presidents at its meeting on March 3. Each of the incumbent college presidents was invited to defend his administration at the meeting but no faculty, staff, or student body was actively to support his candidacy.¹¹⁷ On March 3, 1941, the State Board voted to replace A.A. Fredericks with Dr. Joe Farrar. The vote was not released, although it appears to have been either seven to three or six to four. The removal of A.A. Fredericks was political just as had been the earlier replacement of presidents Roy and Tison. In fact, within the first year of the Jones administration, the president of every state college under the board except South-eastern was replaced.¹¹⁸

Perhaps the *Current Sauce* in saying "aloha" to President "Freddy" described his administration better than others could: "And don't think that he feels, for one fleeting instant, that he is bidding goodbye to the Normal. He's not the sort of man to run away and leave an institution that he has helped to build, from a shapeless, inchoate mass of restrictions and inhibitions, to a living, breathing group of youthful seekers after the truth." Continuing on, the student newspaper declared, "At any rate things have *happened* on this campus since the Frederickses took over. Beautiful and utilitarian buildings have sprung up where scrubby pines once stood. Academic standards have been raised from nearly nothing to the present decent place they occupy."¹¹⁹ No one could deny that the face of the Normal had been

¹¹⁵Fredericks, "Memoranda."

¹¹⁶Tarver, "Brother Square-Toes," 79.

¹¹⁷Resolution, State Board of Education, January 2, 1941, Fredericks Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U. H.H. White, president of the State Board, had earlier expressed the opinion that the incumbent presidents should be kept in office "unless good and sufficient reason can be shown in any particular case or cases for a change." He hoped that changes would not be "dictated by politics." H.H. White to John E. Coxe, July 18, 1940, *ibid.*

¹¹⁸[Baton Rouge] *Morning Advocate*, March 4, 1941; Tarver, "Brother Square-Toes," 83.

¹¹⁹*The Current Sauce*, March 27, 1941. After leaving the Louisiana State Normal College in 1941, Mr. Fredericks served as a special agent of the Kansas City Southern and Louisiana and Arkansas railroads. Retaining his interest in politics, he served as executive secretary to Governor Earl K. Long from 1948 to 1950 and from 1959 through 1960 and as a member of the State Board of Education from 1948 through 1956. Other key positions Mr. Fredericks held were: Commissioner of State Welfare, 1950-1952; Chairman of the Louisiana Commission on the Aging, 1959-1963; and a member of the State Board of Commerce and Industry, 1948-1960. In 1964 he was named President Emeritus of Northwestern and in 1966 honored on "Albert A. Fredericks Day" on campus. A.A. Fredericks died at the age of eighty-four on October 22, 1975. A.A. Fredericks, "Albert A. Fredericks," Fredericks Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U., *Alumni Columns*, XXXV (Fall, 1975), 5, *ibid.*, XXXV (Spring, 1976), 4.

changed drastically by President Fredericks or that the students were a happier group of young scholars. He left the State Normal with rejuvenated spirit and an expanded physical plant that would sustain the institution in the future years.

Student life in the early Tison years did not differ significantly from the Roy era. The annual enrollment in the college department remained constant from 1929 to 1932 hovering about twenty-one hundred students. Although women still greatly outnumbered men, there was an increase in the number of male students perhaps because of the lack of jobs during the depression or possibly because of new curricula, such as commerce, which were more attractive to young men. With the deepening depression in 1932, the number of students declined to 1,983, but the number of men still continued to increase.¹²⁰ Approximately one thousand students were residing on campus in the club's eight women's and two men's dormitories. Board expenses, including board, lodging, lights, water, heat, and service, were sixty-three dollars for a twelve-week quarter with a laundry charge of nine dollars for the same period. With other incidental charges, a Normal student paid \$84.25 a term.¹²¹ In 1933 the expenses for attending the Normal decreased with room and board costing fifty-nine dollars and laundry six dollars or a total, with incidentals, of seventy-six dollars a term.¹²² For the first time, more than 150 students living within fifty or sixty miles of the Normal were able to attend college due to President Tison's initiative. He instituted bus service for these students at a nominal cost. The commuters were allowed to schedule their classes between the second and sixth period to shorten their school day as much as possible.¹²³ To aid needy students, work, academic, and parish scholarships as well as loan funds were available. For example, in the fall of 1929, forty students borrowed money from the Alby L. Smith and student loan funds to attend the Normal.¹²⁴

Until 1932 the rules governing club members remained unchanged from the Roy era. That year some of the more restrictive regulations were rescinded. The

¹²⁰[The Normal Quarterly of the State Normal College]. *Announcements for Forty-Fifth Year of the State Normal College. Catalog, 1929. Roster of Students and Graduates For Year 1928*, XVIII (April 1929), 203, cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly, 1929*; *Announcements for Forty-Sixth Year of the State Normal College. Catalog, 1930. Roster of Students and Graduates for Year 1929*, XIX (April 1930), 202, cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly, 1930*; *Announcements for Forty-Seventh Year of the State Normal College. Catalog, 1931. Roster of Students and Graduates For Year 1930*, XX (April 1931), 179, cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly, 1931*; *Announcements for Forty-Eighth Year of the State Normal College. Catalog, 1932. Roster of Students and Graduates For Year 1931*, XXI (April 1932), 177, cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly, 1932*; *Announcements for Forty-Ninth Year of the Louisiana State Normal College. Catalog, 1933. Roster of Students and Graduates For Year 1932*, XXII (April 1933), 165, cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly, 1933*. The enrollment figures do not include elementary and high school students and students enrolled in correspondence and extension courses.

¹²¹*Normal Quarterly, 1932*, 59.

¹²²*Ibid.*, 1933, 29.

¹²³Newspaper clipping, September 17, 1932, Melrose Scrapbook #69, 9, Melrose Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹²⁴*The Natchitoches Times*, August 23, 1929.

rule limiting freshmen and sophomores to one shopping visit to town a week was eliminated. Students no longer had to obtain the matron's permission to leave their dormitories after study bell and club members did not have to attend Sunday church services although they were strongly urged to do so. Girls boarding in town were governed by the same regulations as those living on campus.¹²⁵

Most of the earlier religious organizations, departmental clubs, and literary societies continued to function at the Normal and a few new ones were added. A group of students interested in art established the Art Club in August 1929, and the college string orchestra was formed in the winter of that year. For those involved in the commerce curriculum, a Commercial Club was organized in 1931 and the same year the Orchesis Club, a dance organization, and a Social Science Club were formed.¹²⁶ From the beginning of his administration, Mr. Tison encouraged students to participate in the campus clubs and organizations.¹²⁷ Two fraternities, Phi Kappa Nu and Sigma Tau Gamma, also established chapters at the Normal. Near the end of his administration, President Tison, with the assistance of his faculty, organized a chapter of Kappa Delta Pi, the first national honorary society established at the State Normal.¹²⁸

While W.W. Tison was president, the State Normal College celebrated two notable anniversaries. The first was the state-wide George Washington Bicentennial Celebration commemorating the 200th anniversary of the birth of the first president held on campus March 19, 1932. Despite the students' threats to boycott the celebration, it was a great success. Five hundred schools entered elementary school spelling and declamation contests and high school essay and oratorical contests. Superintendent Harris addressed the gathering and H.H. White, president of the State Board of Education, awarded prizes to the students. The day ended with a pageant depicting scenes from Washington's life in which college students and organizations participated.¹²⁹

Two years later, on April 13 and 14, 1934, the State Normal College celebrated its golden jubilee. The celebration began the afternoon of Friday, April 13, with a concert by the Normal band and a short program, "Ties that Bind," followed by an evening reception. The main event of Saturday was a morning anniversary program featuring Dr. H.L. Donovan, president of Eastern Kentucky State Teachers' College and president of the American Association of Teachers' Colleges, as the speaker. Governor O.K. Allen also appeared on the program as well as representatives of more than thirty Louisiana and out-of-state colleges. A barbecue was served at noon followed by open house activities sponsored by campus organiza-

¹²⁵*Normal Quarterly, 1932*, 61-62.

¹²⁶*Ibid.*, 1933, 48-49; Combs, "Tison."

¹²⁷*The Natchitoches Times*, August 2, 1929.

¹²⁸*Ibid.*, December 6, 1929, February 14, 1930; *Potpourri*, 1933, 147, 149.

¹²⁹*The Natchitoches Times*, March 11, 1932, March 25, 1932.

Northwestern State University

tions and an educational symposium held in Caldwell Hall. The two-day celebration concluded with a pageant, "Fifty Years of Service and Progress," featuring five hundred Normal students followed by a college dance. Thousands of alumni joined students in commemorating the first fifty years of the Normal. The most lasting result of the 1934 celebration was a compilation of articles describing the college's early leaders and major events.¹³⁰

In 1933, the year before A.A. Fredericks became president of the State Normal College, the enrollment dropped to 1,741 students in the college department. Then it began a steady rise which continued throughout President Fredericks's administration until by 1940 there were 2,644 students taking college courses.¹³¹ The cost of room and board was also increasing during the same period. In 1935 a Normal student paid sixty-five dollars for room and board, six dollars for laundry, and \$10.75 in minor fees, or a total of \$81.75 a quarter.¹³² The next year room and board expenses and laundry costs did not increase but incidental fees rose to \$18.75 for a quarterly total of \$89.75. In 1937 room and board costs rose again to \$69.20 making the quarterly expenses \$93.95. Beginning in 1939 student expenses were charged on a semester basis and rose only insignificantly during the last three years of Fredericks's administration.¹³³

There were several reasons for a rising enrollment in spite of the depression and increasing costs of education. One of these was the financial aid provided students by various programs especially the National Youth Administration. In 1935 some 188 students were employed at the Normal under this program. Each student had to be financially unable to attend college without assistance and had to carry a load equivalent to three-fourths of a normal load. The NYA students did work "of a socially useful character and of such a nature as would not otherwise be paid for

¹³⁰Ibid., February 16, 1934, April 6, 1934, April 13, 1934; April 30, 1934, May 4, 1934; *The Shreveport Times*, April 8, 1934, Melrose Scrapbook #72, 52, Melrose Collection, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; newspaper clipping, n.d. ibid.

¹³¹[*The Normal Quarterly of the State Normal College*]. *Announcements for the Fiftieth Year of the Louisiana State Normal College. Catalog, 1934. Roster of Students and Graduates For Year 1933*, XXIII (April 1934), 165, cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly, 1934*; *Louisiana State Normal Catalog, 1941* [*The Normal Quarterly of the State Normal College*], XXX (April 1941), 140, cited hereafter as *L.S.N.C. Catalog, 1941*.

¹³²[*The Normal Quarterly of the State Normal College*]. *Announcements for the Fifty-first Year of the Louisiana State Normal College. Catalog, 1935. Roster of Students and Graduates For Year 1934*, XXIV (April 1935), 26, cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly, 1935*.

¹³³[*The Normal Quarterly of the State Normal College*]. *Announcements for the Fifty-Second Year of the Louisiana State Normal College. Catalog, 1936. Roster of Students and Graduates For Year 1935*, XXV (April 1936), 26, cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly, 1936*; *Announcements for the Fifty-Third Year of the Louisiana State Normal College. Catalog, 1937. Roster of Students and Graduates For Year 1936*, XXVI (April 1937), 20, cited hereafter as *Normal Quarterly, 1937*; *L.S.N.C. Catalog, 1941*, 21.

The Light of a New Day



Bus barn

by the institution" to defray their expenses.¹³⁴ They were paid thirty cents an hour with monthly earnings ranging from five dollars to fifteen dollars and averaging \$11.24. Besides holding traditional college jobs in the dining hall, library, campus offices, dairy and field house, some NYA recipients helped construct buildings — two men's dormitories, one women's dormitory, and two sorority houses — at the Normal.¹³⁵ The federal aid program was in addition to the Normal's regular scholarship and loan programs so that any deserving student could find some financial assistance available.

Another reason for the growing student body was President Fredericks's improvement and expansion of the bus service to the Normal. Typical of the Normal commuter was Bobbie Arledge who traveled 74,705 miles in her twelve years of elementary, high school, and college training. Of this distance, she walked 10,461 miles and rode school buses for another 64,344 miles. Beginning at age seven, the young student rose at 4:30 a.m. each day, prepared breakfast for her family of nine, walked five miles over country lanes, rode crowded school buses over twenty-eight miles of rough roads, attended classes six hours, returned home at 5 p.m., helped with the household chores, and prepared her lessons by flickering lamp

¹³⁴*Current Sauce*, October 17, 1935, October 3, 1935.

¹³⁵"Summary Report of the Administration of Albert A. Fredericks," Fredericks Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *Current Sauce*, October 3, 1935.

light. Miss Arledge, upon graduating in 1938, commented, "I didn't mind getting up so early and cooking breakfast as I have always been accustomed to that, but sometimes walking that five miles in mud up to my knees and riding with 75 people in a school bus built for 40 got on my nerves." She remembered only two breakdowns of school buses — once when the back end of the bus collapsed and once when the motor fell out — but she added "the teachers were kind enough not to mark them [the students] tardy." As amazing as Miss Arledge's persistence in getting an education was the fact that her expenses for four years of college amounted to only \$232.60.¹³⁶

Probably the most important factor causing increasing enrollments at the Normal was the popularity of President Fredericks himself and his genuine concern for the welfare of the students. Without a doubt, A.A. Fredericks was one of the best liked presidents to ever serve the State Normal College and the students were a happy group during his years. Almost immediately upon taking office, President Fredericks began to modify the strict, and often unreasonable, regulations of the Roy-Tison period. In September 1934 he announced that LSNC women students would be allowed to live off-campus with their parents' permission.¹³⁷ Still, the young ladies were protected with a myriad of regulations. They could live only in homes approved by the college, had to sign in and out, and observe the same study hours as the campus residents with lights out at 11:00 p.m. On weekends the off-campus boarders, like the campus residents, could stay out until 10:30 p.m. but they could not spend the night away from their boarding house, could not attend off-campus dances, and could not ride in automobiles with "dates".¹³⁸ In addition to allowing women students to live in Natchitoches, President Fredericks also opened the Normal to the town by tearing down the high fence which Mr. Roy had erected around the campus. He obviously never approved of the fence for, unknown to President Roy, as a professor he would repeatedly and deliberately crash through the front gate.¹³⁹

Improving the contact between the town and the Normal was only the first of Mr. Fredericks's innovations. On campus he initiated several changes with the hearty approval of the students. The student and faculty campus gathering place was the R.O. (Religious Organizations) Shop which was managed by representatives of the religious organizations. Profits from the shop were used for charitable projects. In 1934 college officials announced that the R.O. Shop would be enlarged and improved to create a "campus center." Located half-way between the class-

¹³⁶The Natchitoches Times, July 29, 1938, December 30, 1938.

¹³⁷Ibid., September 7, 1934.

¹³⁸Ethel L. Hereford, Requirements for Approved Houses for Women Students Boarding in the City; Regulations For Women Students Boarding in Natchitoches, Fredericks Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹³⁹Notes of a conversation with Mrs. A.A. Fredericks, June 16, 1980, uncatalogued Fredericks papers, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.



President Roy's fence

rooms and dorms, the expanded R.O. Shop served refreshments and provided entertainment for students during their free time.¹⁴⁰ Soon known as the Field House, the recreational center was, of all things, opened to students for dancing in 1934. Enthusiastically, the *Current Sauce* declared, "In our mind this is quite the biggest and best step that has been taken yet to facilitate campus life."¹⁴¹ By 1935 the field house was further improved by the addition of a smoker and an electric drinking fountain and was serving sandwiches, cold drinks, snacks, and hot plate lunches to the grateful students.¹⁴² At the same time President Fredericks toured the social room in Social Hall at the request of the students and announced a three thousand dollar remodeling project to make the reception room more pleasant and appealing to students. Commenting on his action, the *Current Sauce* approvingly editorialized, "He seems to be observing a policy: 'your every wish is my command' in dealing with the student body."¹⁴³ Obviously President Fredericks felt that students should be happy in the Normal, their home away from home, and was committed to making their surroundings as pleasant as possible.

Regulations governing student conduct were also liberalized during the Fredericks years but not enough to satisfy the students completely. In 1935 the students complained that there was no published list of regulations and that some regulations were made on the spur of the moment by various administrators which led to unfair punishment of violators.¹⁴⁴ The next year some men students were so dissatisfied with the strict regulations that they decided to demonstrate against them. Covered with sheets to hide their identity, thirty-four young men paraded through the campus one night between 10:30 and 11:00 p.m. demanding justice. Two night

¹⁴⁰*Current Sauce*, October 11, 1934.

¹⁴¹Ibid., October 27, 1934.

¹⁴²Ibid., October 10, 1935.

¹⁴³Ibid., May 23, 1935.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., October 10, 1935.

watchmen's attempt to prevent them from entering a restricted area led to a scuffle between the protesters and the guards. Although one night watchman was uninjured, the other was badly bruised and beaten. The next morning President Fredericks met with the students and announced that all thirty-four protestors, including practically the entire varsity football team, were suspended indefinitely. Several hundred students gathered in support of the ousted men and decided to observe a "holiday" until the suspended men were reinstated. The incident was defused when the students voted to return to class after President Fredericks talked to them and promised to study their complaints. "When you have any difficulty regarding your school life here, come to my office or my home and I shall help you out," he declared to the students. He also promised a complete revision of the Normal's rules and regulations by a faculty committee.¹⁴⁵

A.A. Fredericks made good, as he usually did, on his promise to the students. In 1936 a student-faculty committee began work on a complete revision of the college regulations, the publication of a L.S.N.C. handbook, and a new student body constitution. Greater liberty and personal freedom and increased student responsibility were the keynotes of the new documents.¹⁴⁶ The new *L.S.N.C. Student Handbook* was distributed to students at registration in 1936. It included general information, the student body constitution, dormitory regulations for women, social regulations, penalties for violation of rules, general policies and practices relating to social activities, health and safety of students, general practices and rules of off-campus students, and a listing of campus organizations.¹⁴⁷ Although many rules and regulations were liberalized, Normal students were not satisfied and wanted still more freedom from restrictions. A few weeks before President Fredericks's departure, the *Current Sauce* in an editorial requested that something be done about the "adolescent out-moded handbook" which for some time had served the college as "a Declaration of Bondage, Inanity, and Tommyrot."¹⁴⁸

A major reorganization of campus societies and clubs also occurred during the Fredericks's years. Unfortunately, the literary and departmental clubs which had been sources of academic excellence for years were dealt a death blow in 1934 when college authorities announced that credits in these organizations were no longer required for graduation.¹⁴⁹ With membership on a voluntary basis, most of the organizations ceased to function within a few years. The only extracurricular organizations listed in the 1940 *L.S.N.C. Handbook* were the Dramatics Club, Euthenics Club, Forensic Club, "N" Club, Orchesis Club, Purple Jacket Club,

¹⁴⁵Ibid., May 7, 1936; Faculty Meeting, May 5, 1936, Fredericks Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *The Natchitoches Times*, May 8, 1936.

¹⁴⁶*Current Sauce*, May 21, 1936.

¹⁴⁷*L.S.N.C. Student Handbook*, 1936-37.

¹⁴⁸*Current Sauce*, March 13, 1941.

¹⁴⁹Ibid., October 27, 1934.

and Women's Athletic Association. The defunct organizations were, however, partially replaced by honorary co-educational fraternities and social sororities and fraternities. By 1940 nine honorary fraternities had chapters on campus: Alpha Phi Gamma, journalism; Alpha Psi Omega, dramatics; Demeter, agriculture; Kappa Delta Pi, education; Lambda Delta Lambda, science; Phi Alpha Theta, history; Phi Kappa, fine arts; Pi Delta Epsilon, biology; and Sigma Pi Rho, Latin.¹⁵⁰ Five social sororities, Alpha Sigma Alpha, Sigma Sigma Sigma, Delta Sigma Epsilon, Phi Kappa Sigma, and Theta Sigma Upsilon and three fraternities, Lambda Zeta, Phi Kappa Nu, and Sigma Tau Gamma, were also represented on campus.¹⁵¹ These newer organizations assumed some of the functions of the older literary and departmental clubs.

Varsity sports continued to receive enthusiastic support at the Normal especially with the construction of the new stadium, athletic complex, and athletic dormitory. Perhaps it was destiny that the year the stadium was completed, the Normal teams reached a pinnacle of success seldom enjoyed by a college. In 1939 Normal teams in three major sports won championships. The basketball team gained the "Little Four Crown" and ranked first in its division of the S.I.A.A. The undefeated and untied football squad won the S.I.A.A. and the newly-formed Louisiana College Conference championships. The track team also won the S.I.A.A. district championship.¹⁵²

The most spectacular event of Mr. Fredericks's administration was the Texas Centennial Trip in October 1936. Using surplus money from the bookstore, lyceum, and Field House receipts, President Fredericks took all resident Normal students without cost to themselves to visit the Texas Centennial in Dallas. The college paid four dollars round trip per student on a special Texas and Pacific train which departed Natchitoches at 10 p.m. Friday, October 2, and returned 6:15 a.m., Sunday, October 4. The only expense to the approximately twelve hundred students who made the trip was the entrance fee to the centennial grounds and their meals. J.W. Turner, assistant general agent for the railroad who accompanied the group, praised the Normal students for their exemplary behavior on the train. "In other words these young people acted like perfect ladies and gentlemen," he wrote W.J. Burke, a member of the State Board of Education.¹⁵³ Certainly such a trip must have been a memorable one for students in a depression year, and for many of them it was the farthest they had ever traveled from home.

¹⁵⁰*L.S.N.C. Handbook*, 1940-41.

¹⁵¹Ibid.

¹⁵²*Current Sauce*, January 11, 1940; Louisiana State Normal College, [1938-39], Fredericks Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁵³*Current Sauce*, September 24, 1936; *The Natchitoches Times*, October 2, 1936; J.W. Turner to W.J. Burke, October 7, 1936, uncatalogued Fredericks Papers, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.



New Field House

When the new Field House was opened to students for dancing in 1934, the *Current Sauce* ecstatically exclaimed, "The light of a new day is streaking the Normal horizon. There is music in the air and a feeling of good fellowship and good will everywhere."¹⁵⁴ Although exaggerating somewhat, the student newspaper was not describing just one event in 1934 but prophetically the next seven years under A.A. Fredericks. A "light of a new day" had dawned at the State Normal under President Fredericks — a light which shone not only on happy students in pursuit of scholarship and good times but also on gleaming new buildings and well-tended grounds. The light would be dimmed but not extinguished in the near future by the approaching dark days of war.

¹⁵⁴*Current Sauce*, October 27, 1934.

"A WIDER FIELD OF INFLUENCE:" NORTHWESTERN STATE COLLEGE OF LOUISIANA

The Louisiana State Normal College entered the decade of the 1940s with prospects of continued growth and progress. But, unfortunately, a global tragedy, World War II, dashed the expectations of the college. Instead of an increased enrollment, the State Normal saw most of her young men go to war, many of her young women choose either military service or war-related employment, and some of her faculty serve in the armed forces. Several campus activities, notably inter-collegiate sports, were suspended temporarily during the conflict while maintenance of buildings was curtailed and new construction ceased. On the bright side, World War II provided the State Normal with several thousand new students — naval cadets — who gave the college a military appearance and several new war-related programs. In 1944 the Louisiana State Normal College became Northwestern State College of Louisiana by a popularly approved constitutional amendment. Although some alumni and friends of the college were saddened by the name change, others felt that the word "normal" would be an obstacle to attracting students in the post-war years. The name change, however, and even the addition of new curricula such as nursing, did not increase the enrollment to its pre-war figure principally because the college had internal problems which adversely affected its growth throughout the forties and early fifties.

The most apparent of these problems was the quick succession of four presidents and one acting president in a thirteen-year span. Joe Farrar, Joseph E. Gibson, G.W. McGinty, and H. Lee Prather served as presidents, and Augustus Carlyle Maddox as acting president between April 1941 and May 1954. With so many chief administrators, there was little continuity in programs, no effective long-range planning, and much outside criticism of the college. Much of the presidential turnover was due to the impact of Louisiana politics on the college's administration even though the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools had restored accreditation to the State Normal in 1941 on the basis that it was free from political domination. Despite the association's declaration, behind-the-scenes malevolent political interference compounded the usual adjustments of the war and post-war years.

When Joe Farrar became president of the State Normal College on April 1, 1941, he was no stranger to Louisiana education or the Natchitoches institution. Born on December 8, 1892, near Spearsville, Louisiana, to Benjamin Franklin and Martha (Stokes) Farrar, Joe received his early schooling in Union Parish. Armed with a teaching certificate, he began teaching in 1910 but two years later decided to enter the State Normal School where he pursued the two-year curriculum.

After graduation, he resumed his teaching career except for one year as purchasing agent and bookstore manager at the State Normal and two years military service. He held several administrative positions including the principalship of Morgan City High School for six years and Haynesville High School for ten years.¹ To obtain these positions and move still further up the career ladder, he entered Louisiana State University where he received the B.S. degree in education in 1922. Several years later he began graduate study at the University of Iowa where he earned the M.A. degree in 1928 and then continued his studies at George Peabody College for Teachers which awarded him the Ph.D. degree in 1936.² For six years, 1934 to 1939, Joe Farrar served as professor of education and director of student teaching at Louisiana State University. In 1939 he was named president of John McNeese Junior College in Lake Charles and six months later, Director of Higher Education in the State Department of Education.³ With his extensive professional training and varied teaching and administrative experience, Joe Farrar was well qualified to serve as the Normal's eighth president.

On March 3, 1941, the State Board of Education elected Joe Farrar president of the State Normal College. He was to proceed as soon as possible to Natchitoches where he would officially assume his duties at the Normal on April 1. The Normal faculty and students received him warmly when he pledged himself to the continued advancement of the State Normal College in his first appearance before them.⁴ However, following the popular and successful A.A. Fredericks, Dr. Farrar could expect to encounter considerable opposition to his administration, but the deluge of criticism that engulfed him was overwhelming. Some of the controversy resulted from President Farrar's own *modus operandi*. Determined to raise the Normal's academic image and eliminate the debilitating involvement of Louisiana politics at the institution, he tersely announced his policies and then doggedly defended them. With no attempt to use diplomacy or compromise he met criticism head on and bluntly denounced the sources of it. When he identified a problem at the college, he confronted those responsible and expected them to rectify it. Enthusiastic but also realistic in the early months of his administration, President Farrar wrote, "It has been a whale of a big job, but we are working at it and we have the feeling that sooner or later we will have here an institution in which the state can take considerable pride."⁵ A few months later, in a more dejected mood, he wrote,

¹ *Who's Who in America*, 25 (1948-1949), 774; Otis R. Crew, "History of Northwestern State College" (typewritten), 64. Cited hereafter as Crew, "Northwestern State College."

² *Who's Who in America*, 25 (1948-1949), 774; *The Current Sauce*, March 27, 1941.

³ Crew, "Northwestern State College," 64; *The Natchitoches Times*, March 7, 1941; *The Current Sauce*, March 27, 1941.

⁴ *Official Proceedings of the State Board of Education*, March 3, 1941, Bulletin 449 (John E. Cox, 1941), 18; Crew, "Northwestern State College," 64.

⁵ Joe Farrar to Lt. Col. R.F. Kennon, January 6, 1942, Joe Farrar Papers, University Archives, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana; cited hereafter as Farrar Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

"I like it here in many ways but I believe I would be much more contented if I could hide myself in some classroom. I am tired of administrative problems."⁶ Obviously the burdens of office were already resting heavily on his shoulders.

Although Dr. Farrar's frankness and inability or refusal to compromise were the source of some of the criticism which swirled about his administration, most of it originated blatantly in Louisiana politics. Since he was an appointee of the reform governor, Sam Houston Jones, and dedicated to removing academics from the realm of politics, Farrar became the favorite target of the pro-Long faction, especially ex-president and still-Senator A.A. Fredericks. A classic Long versus anti-Long conflict was emerging to the detriment of the State Normal College. The barrage of criticism began in the fall of 1941 when Senator Fredericks accused President Farrar of not being interested in the education of the poor by discontinuing scholarships to worthy and needy students. He was referring to a commuting student from Red River parish who had lost his bus scholarship. Dr. Farrar explained and defended the policy of the college scholarship committee which was to award working scholarships on the basis of need and worthiness and not where a student lived or how he traveled to school. Furthermore, he pointed out, the student in question was receiving financial aid.⁷

The war of words between Senator Fredericks and President Farrar was just heating up. In February 1942 the senator wrote Governor Jones offering to support his program to cut the cost of state government and thus reduce the burden of taxation on the people of Louisiana. And, of course, Senator Fredericks took the opportunity to point out to the governor the excessive cost of maintaining the Normal College. He noted that it cost twice as much to educate a student at the Normal as it had when he was president. Senator Fredericks attributed this condition to a drop in enrollment of more than 30 percent and to the hiring of highly paid administrators, especially the new dean of instruction whom he claimed had been fired from a Georgia state college for allegedly teaching racial equality.⁸ Dr. Farrar's response was immediate and bombastic. "Postal laws and my church membership forbid such comments as I would like to make about the recent letter of the Honorable A.A. Fredericks," he wrote Governor Jones. The enrollment at the State Normal had declined, he admitted, but this was an unfortunate phenomenon experienced by other American colleges. Furthermore, he explained that the Normal's enrollment drop was due partially to the loss of 349 NYA students whom he charged Fredericks had improperly listed as college students to obtain increased state appropriations. The NYA project was terminated by the federal government

⁶ Joe Farrar to Dr. P.M. Bail, March 16, 1942, *ibid.*

⁷ Joseph E. Gibson to Joe Farrar, October 1, 1941, *ibid.*; Joe Farrar to Joseph E. Gibson, October 7, 1941, *ibid.*

⁸ A.A. Fredericks to Sam Houston Jones, February 11, 1942, *ibid.*; Sam H. Jones to Joe Farrar, February 23, 1942, *ibid.*

on June 30, 1941. Continuing his defense, President Farrar denied that it cost twice as much to educate students at the Normal as it did in the earlier Fredericks years, but he did point out that the operation of the physical plant and employment of the faculty, all tenured, were fixed expenses which he had inherited and that the cost of items purchased for the college had risen 35 percent. With some pride, he noted that the next year's college budget recommended a 12.5 percent salary increase for all employees, yet the requested sum for personal services was less than that of Mr. Fredericks's last year. Finally he defended his appointments including the new dean of instruction, Dr. M.S. Pittman, whom he described as "an outstanding scholar and gentleman of the highest order." Ending his letter to Governor Jones as he had begun it on a note of anger and frustration, he exclaimed, "I am getting pretty tired of his [Fredericks's] tactics and of his inability to tell the truth. I believe I can defend my conduct as the president of the Louisiana State Normal College before any fair tribunal of intelligent gentlemen. I don't propose to defend it to A.A. Fredericks and his tribe."⁹

President Farrar never defended his administration of the State Normal to Senator Fredericks, but he found himself constantly in the role of defending it from the attacks of A.A. Fredericks. In May 1942 Senator Fredericks repeated his criticisms of the Normal administration, especially the declining enrollment and excessive cost of operating the college, on the floor of the State Senate. To these he added a charge that the Normal building program had come to a complete halt during his successor's administration. Again President Farrar went into a detailed explanation of the student loss and cost of operating the college. To the senator's charge that his administration had not built "even a chicken coop," the Normal president admitted that it was true, "but we did get rid of a man who was drawing \$75.00 per month for tending to less than 200 chickens on the campus." He also noted that three dormitories and the Dining Hall had been completely repaired out of the regular budget. With a sense of accomplishment, he declared that only \$432 thousand of the \$772 thousand appropriation for 1941-1942 had been spent and that the State Normal was the only institution of higher education in the state requesting a budget decrease for the next biennium.¹⁰

When the fall elections of 1942 approached, the Long and anti-Long combatants went into high gear and again President Farrar was in the midst of the fray. In August he wrote Walter W. Teekell, a member of the State Board of Education, that he was "getting a great deal of free publicity in Natchitoches this weekend. The Long-Cawthorne-Boucher-Webb-Fredericks gang is in town and I am the principal object of their attack in their circulars which were distributed yesterday."¹¹ In the circular which Dr. Farrar referred to, Senator Fredericks declared, "Yes, I would consider it a distinct honor to be head of the Normal College. And

if I should, I wish to assure everyone concerned that the poor boys and girls will be again given an opportunity to attend the Normal College; that the College Bus system will be re-established and that money appropriated by the State Legislature will be spent for and by the Normal College and not sent back to Baton Rouge to be spent at other institutions."¹² President Farrar brought one of the circulars to a State Board meeting hoping that the board would answer "the deliberate falsehoods of this gang of SKUNKS."¹³ The Fredericks circular was followed a few weeks later by charges that the Natchitoches area had lost the 1942 army maneuvers because of the Normal president's unwillingness to cooperate with the military. In his defense, Dr. Farrar secured a letter from Walter Krueger, commanding general of the Third Army, stating that the decision to locate the maneuvers in another area was made for tactical and logistical reasons and "not because of any lack of cooperation by the citizens of Natchitoches or the authorities of the State Normal College." President Farrar published the general's letter "for the benefit of those who would like to know the truth."¹⁴ Still the criticisms of the Normal president continued until they finally reached Superintendent of Education John E. Coxe through Senator Lloyd L. Hendrick of Shreveport in September 1942. Superintendent Coxe defended Dr. Farrar, and the Normal president invited Senator Hendrick to visit the college where "the records concerning enrollment and expenditure . . . will be made available for your inspection."¹⁵

The significant drop in the State Normal's enrollment could, perhaps, be explained, but it could not be denied. The immediate cause of the loss of students was World War II, but the long-range reason was the fact that the institution was still almost exclusively a teachers' college while young people were interested in entering newer fields of technology, science, and business. Simply, the Normal had not changed rapidly enough to meet shifting student interests and the demands of modern society. Surely Dr. Farrar realized the perilous plight of the institution by 1943. Once again in the political campaign of that year, the declining Normal enrollment became an issue. It was charged that the State Normal had lost more students than either Southwestern Louisiana Institute or Louisiana Polytechnic Institute. President Farrar admitted that the criticism was probably true, but he

¹²"Senator Fredericks Replies To Unsigned Yellow Sheet Which Was Issued by John O. Williams and Sam Jones' Puppets," n.d., Albert A. Fredericks Papers, Uncatalogued collection of Fredericks's personal papers, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana.

¹³Joe Farrar to Walter W. Teekell, August 15, 1942, Farrar Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁴Joe Farrar to General Walter Krueger [sic], September 5, 1942, *ibid*; Walter Krueger to Joe Farrar, September 12, 1942, *ibid*.

¹⁵Lloyd L. Hendrick to John E. Coxe, September 5, 1942, *ibid*; John E. Coxe to Lloyd L. Hendrick, September 14, 1942, *ibid*; John E. Coxe to Joe Farrar, September 16, 1942, *ibid*; Joe Farrar to Lloyd L. Hendrick, September 21, 1942, *ibid*.

⁹Joe Farrar to Sam Houston Jones, February 25, 1952, *ibid*.

¹⁰Joe Farrar to Grove Stafford, May 29, 1942, *ibid*.

¹¹Joe Farrar to Walter W. Teekell, August 15, 1942, *ibid*.

also emphasized that the State Normal had no engineering program and no liberal arts majors in the fields of mathematics, physics, and chemistry. Because the army and navy needed people in these technical areas, students were given deferments to complete their studies. Teachers were not given deferments and 95 percent of the Normal's students were in teacher training. Furthermore, high school graduates and college students realized that they could obtain higher salaries in industry and military services with less education than they could as teachers after four years of college preparation.¹⁶

The Normal's enrollment problems were, as Dr. Farrar pointed out, typical of teachers' colleges in general. A survey of twenty-eight Southern teachers' colleges taken in 1943 showed that their enrollments had declined from a low of 24 percent to a high of 74 percent between October 1, 1941, and October 1, 1943. The Normal's loss of 52 percent of its students, from 1,190 to 574, placed the institution in eighth place in retaining students.¹⁷ Nor were the Southern teachers' colleges the only teacher-training institutions affected by the war. The U.S. Office of Education of the Federal Security Agency also took an enrollment survey in 1943. The federal survey showed that the 1943 enrollments for all institutions of higher education in the nation were more than 25 percent below the 1940 peak. For teachers' colleges the decline was greater. "The decrease is particularly heavy in teachers' colleges and normal schools; their present enrollment comes to only about 40 percent of the number preparing for a teaching career in 1939-40." Furthermore, the report concluded that compared to the previous year's enrollment, teachers' colleges and normal schools had lost 14.7 percent of their students while other universities, colleges, and professional schools showed a decline of only 4.6 percent.¹⁸ As both surveys indicate, the enrollment problems of the Louisiana State Normal College, despite the political charges, were caused by World War II and the institution's almost exclusive emphasis on teacher training and not by mismanagement or poor administration. Unfortunately, politics served only to hide the facts, and, perhaps, delay a rapid diversification of offerings which would have made the Normal a leader in post-war Louisiana education. Also politics diverted attention from a number of accomplishments of the Farrar administration between 1941 and 1947.

Dr. Farrar's first accomplishment as president of the State Normal was getting the institution re-accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools and other academic organizations which had dropped the college from their accredited lists during the Fredericks administration. In October 1941 a Southern Association committee composed of M.C. Huntley, executive secretary, S.H. Whitley, president, and W.J. McConnell visited the Normal College to inves-

¹⁶Joe Farrar, [Louisiana State Normal College Enrollment], n.d., *ibid.*

¹⁷*Ibid.*

¹⁸Office of War Information, Federal Security Agency, November 26, 1943, *ibid.*

tigate the institution. Their report, prepared by McConnell, was thorough and very favorable to the Normal in all but a few details. In particular, it described Dr. Farrar as "capable of leadership in the right direction and possessed of all the courage and tact necessary to that leadership." The report also approved President Farrar's plan to reorganize the administrative staff by creating three new positions: a director of instruction, a director of student welfare, and a business manager. The only fear expressed by the committee was that the Board of Education might not give the president and his staff the freedom to develop the college as an educational institution or that the governor or other political figures or agencies might interfere with the Normal's operations.¹⁹ Feeling that the Southern Association would request a statement from the State Board concerning its policy toward the institutions under its control, President Farrar recommended to Frank A. Godchaux, president of the board, that he issue a statement along the following lines:

It is the policy of the Louisiana State Board of Education to give the presidents of the state colleges under its control considerable freedom in the selection of their faculty and staff and to protect them at any and all times against political interference of any nature.²⁰

Obviously, the assurance was effective, for in early December 1941 the State Normal was re-admitted to membership in the Southern Association, a move which Dr. Farrar declared "brought a great deal of genuine joy to the people on this campus and to the alumni and friends of this institution throughout the state."²¹ Both *The Current Sauce* and *The Natchitoches Times* declared that the re-admittance of the State Normal into the Southern Association assured Normal graduates that their credits would be fully recognized by all the leading colleges in the nation.²² In answer to an inquiry, Dr. Farrar reported in December 1942 that the college was accredited not only by the Southern Association but also by the American Association of Teachers' Colleges, The American Association of University Professors and the American Medical Association. The Normal was still in the process of applying for accreditation by the American Association of University Women.²³

At the same time the administration was working for accreditation, a movement began to change the name of the State Normal. *The Current Sauce* in an editorial in November 1941 supported the name change for two reasons. First, the student newspaper pointed out, the college was no longer a normal school since that label generally indicated two-year course offerings, and, secondly, there was another

¹⁹W.J. McConnell, "Report of Survey of Louisiana State Normal College," *ibid.*

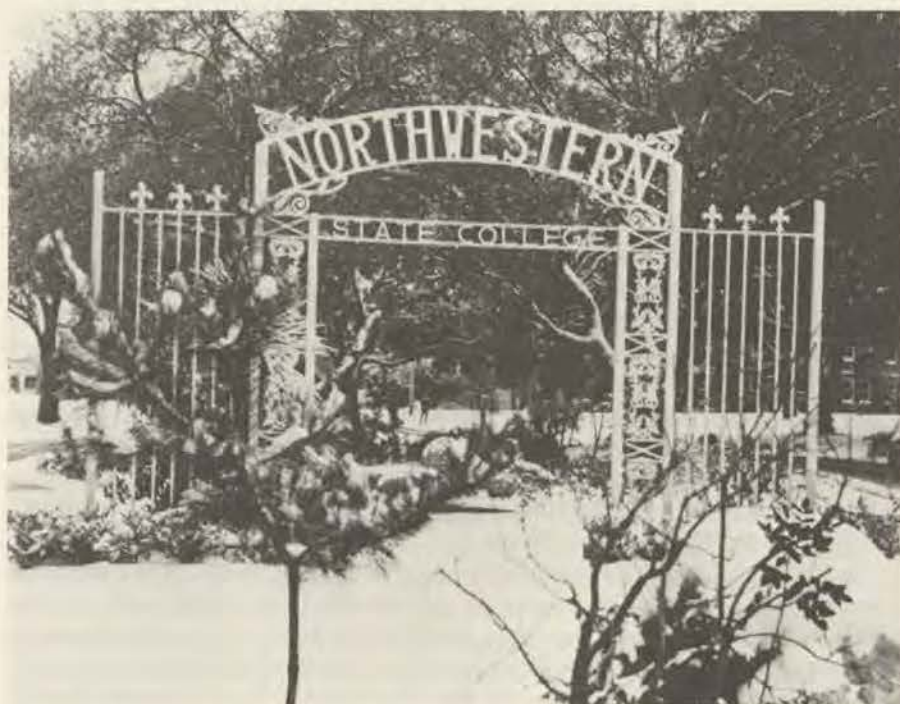
²⁰Farrar to Frank A. Godchaux, October 25, 1941, *ibid.*

²¹M.C. Huntley to Joe Farrar, January 9, 1942, *ibid.*; Joe Farrar to M.C. Huntley, January 13, 1942, *ibid.*

²²*The Current Sauce*, December 11, 1941; *The Natchitoches Times*, December 12, 1941.

²³Joe Farrar to Joe Gibson, November 21, 1942, Farrar Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

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Louisiana Normal, one for Negroes at Grambling. "Frequently those who are careless (or vindictive) confuse the two schools," the newspaper declared.²⁴ A bill to change the name of the State Normal to Louisiana State College was defeated in the House of Representatives by a vote of fifty-five to twenty-seven in June 1942.²⁵ One of the reasons for its failure may have been that the proposal was not presented to the State Board of Education before it was introduced in the legislature. At least one board member, Rufus C. Harris, president of Tulane University, expressed the opinion that the board members would not have approved the name change if it had been presented to them.²⁶

Two years passed before supporters of the Normal again proposed changing the name of the institution. This time the campaign was well orchestrated and had widespread support among the faculty, students, and alumni of the college as well as the local community. On May 1, 1944, the Normal faculty approved unanimously the proposal of a college planning committee headed by John S. Kyser,

²⁴*The Current Sauce*, November 6, 1941.

²⁵*The Natchitoches Times*, June 5, 1942.

²⁶Rufus C. Harris to Joe Farrar, May 20, 1942, Farrar Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

A Wider Field of Influence

head of the Department of Social Sciences, to seek a legal change in the name of the institution to Northwestern State College of Louisiana.²⁷ Four days later a committee representing the college and city of Natchitoches, headed by Dr. Kyser, appeared before the Board of Education to request that it approve the name change. Dr. Kyser, spokesman for the group, argued that the Normal's name was no longer descriptive of its work. Noting that all institutions under the State Board, as well as many others, offered teacher training, Dr. Kyser declared that the State Normal was left "with a distinctive name but no individual job." He also pointed out that the word "normal" de-emphasized the college's other programs, represented in the public's mind exclusively a teachers' college, and often referred to a two-year institution and not to a four-year degree-granting college. Furthermore, he stated, potential male students often thought of the college as a "girls" school because of its name. Explaining the choice of the name "Northwestern State College of Louisiana," Dr. Kyser emphasized that since the name was similar to those of other Louisiana institutions, the college would have no unfair advantage over sister institutions nor undue opposition from them. Like the other institutions under the State Board, it would become a "general and regional" college. He concluded his remarks by noting that since three other Louisiana colleges for white students had changed their names, the Normal's request was not unique and that it had the unified support of the faculty, alumni board, town and civic organizations, director of higher education, and friends of the college.²⁸

The presentation before the State Board of Education was quickly followed by a letter to all Normal alumni repeating the arguments for the name change and asking them to contact their legislators to urge them to vote for the proposal.²⁹ In May 1944 Senator A.A. Fredericks introduced Senate Bill No. 64 in the form of a constitutional amendment to change the name of the State Normal to Northwestern State College of Louisiana. The Senate unanimously approved the bill by a vote of thirty-seven to zero and two weeks later the House of Representatives passed the bill seventy-one to four.³⁰ Since it was a constitutional amendment, Act 326 had to be submitted to the voters for their approval in the November elections. To win its popular acceptance, the College Planning Committee began an intensive campaign through the use of radio broadcasts, news stories and editorials in daily and weekly newspapers, letters to alumni, and contacts with civic and fraternal organizations throughout the state. In October, in a mock election, the student

²⁷The Planning Committee For the General Faculty to the Normal College Alumni, May 11, 1944, *ibid.*

²⁸*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, May 6, 1944, Bulletin 531 (John E. Cox, 1944), 3-5.

²⁹The Planning Committee For the General Faculty to the Normal College Alumni, May 11, 1944, Farrar Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

³⁰*The Natchitoches Times*, May 26, 1944, June 2, 1944, June 16, 1944; *The Current Sauce*, May 20, 1944.

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body voted unanimously for amendment #16, and organized forty-four parish clubs to work for its approval throughout the state.³¹ Success came on November 7, 1944, when the people of Louisiana approved amendment #16 by a substantial majority. Following the required waiting period and Governor Jimmie H. Davis's proclamation, the Louisiana State Normal College officially became Northwestern State College of Louisiana on December 10, 1944.³²

Excitedly, the Normal students declared the name change effective immediately on November 7, but it wasn't until December 9, 1944, that the *Current Sauce* proclaimed in headlines:

COLLEGE WILL BECOME NORTHWESTERN STATE TOMORROW
Today Marks Last Day in Life of Louisiana State Normal College
as Amendment No. 16 Becomes Effective

Two-Year 'Normal' Tag is Removed from Title of Institution by Name Change

The newspaper also noted that the institution began its existence under its new name with 10,735 graduates of whom 3,551 had earned bachelor's degrees.³³ The college celebrated its new name at a special assembly presided over by Dr. Kyser and by the adoption of a new seal containing the pelican and scales insignia of the State of Louisiana in the center, the motto "Union, Justice, Confidence" at the top, and the words Northwestern State College and Natchitoches, Louisiana, in the outer circle.³⁴

Within a year after the renaming of the college, new curricula were added to Northwestern's offerings and a new administrative structure was adopted. In May 1945 the State Board of Education approved the college's request to offer courses in pilot training and collegiate nursing. At the same time the board approved President Farrar's plan to organize Northwestern State College into three schools: Education, Arts and Sciences, and Applied Arts and Sciences.³⁵ The functions of the three schools were the training of teachers, the offering of a liberal or general education, and the presenting of vocational education, especially agriculture, business, and home economics. To involve the faculty in the reorganization, President

³¹The *Natchitoches Times*, October 13, 1944; *The Current Sauce*, October 7, 1944, October 14, 1944.

³²The *Natchitoches Times*, December 8, 1944; *The Current Sauce*, November 11, 1944, December 9, 1944.

³³The *Current Sauce*, December 9, 1944.

³⁴The *Natchitoches Times*, November 17, 1944; *The Current Sauce*, February 3, 1945. The old seal of the State Normal College pictured a child standing at the side of a woman teacher with the inscription "Educatio Adulescentis est civitatis Salus" (Education of Youth Is the Safety of the State) in the center. The wording in the outer ring was State Normal College, Natchitoches, Louisiana, 1885.

³⁵*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, May 8, 1945, Bulletin 581 (John E. Coxe, 1945), 29-30.

A Wider Field of Influence

Farrar had allowed them to vote on the plan and name the three schools.³⁶ The college catalog for 1945-1946 arranged the curricula and courses of instruction for the first time under the three schools. In the fall of 1946 Clarence E. Dugdale was named Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences and John B. Robson, Dean of the School of Education. No one was appointed dean of the School of Applied Arts and Sciences at that time.³⁷ Other new curricula added to NSU's offerings in 1945 included industrial arts, Latin and German languages, medical technology, and journalism.³⁸

In addition to developing curricula for civilian students, the college also participated in several naval programs during President Farrar's administration, thus bringing onto the campus large groups of naval personnel. Before the entrance of the United States into World War II, the State Normal had been offering a pilot training course consisting of seventy-two hours of ground school and thirty-five to



Naval Flight Class

³⁶The *Current Sauce*, February 17, 1945, February 24, 1945.

³⁷*Northwestern State College Quarterly, Catalogue Issue, 1945-1946*, XXXV (April 1946), 44-139; *The Natchitoches Times*, November 29, 1946; *The Alumni Columns*, VI (February 1947), 6.

³⁸The *Current Sauce*, December 15, 1945. Although the college obtained new curricula, it discontinued all extension work as directed by the State Board of Education in its meeting on March 3, 1941. *Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, March 3, 1941, Bulletin 449 (John E. Coxe, 1941), 7. President Farrar also planned to add an engineering school to the college's offerings. *Current Sauce*, February 9, 1946.

fifty hours of flying under the direction of the Civil Aeronautics Authority.³⁹ Within a year after America's involvement in the global conflict, practically every able-bodied young man on the Normal campus had entered military service. To counter the decrease in enrollment and to be of service to the military effort, President Farrar offered the facilities of the State Normal to the War and Navy departments as a site for training programs. He estimated that the college could house an Army or Navy unit of from six hundred to eight hundred men or women.⁴⁰ On December 8, 1942, after an on-site inspection by naval authorities, Dr. Farrar confirmed that his faculty administrative council had agreed to make "A" and "B" dormitories, Caspari Hall, and the Boys' Brick Shack, altogether housing some six hundred men, available for a proposed naval unit.⁴¹ The Navy Department accepted the Normal president's invitation to establish a training unit on campus and in December 1942 Dr. Farrar sought the State Board's approval of the arrangement. He explained that beginning on January 7, 1943, the State Normal would house, feed, and teach approximately six hundred naval cadets with the Navy Department paying all the costs of the program. He estimated that the Naval presence at the Normal would save the State of Louisiana at least \$125 thousand a year. Dr. Rufus Harris commended President Farrar for his fine work in obtaining the naval unit and the board unanimously approved the arrangement.⁴² The State Normal was one of only twenty colleges throughout the nation and one of only two in the South to house a unit of the Naval Flight Preparatory School. For his diligent work in bringing the unit to campus, President Farrar received the heartfelt congratulations of a number of people including Governor Sam H. Jones, Superintendent of Education John E. Coxe, and the Rotary Club of Natchitoches.⁴³

Most of the men participating in the Naval Flight Preparatory School at the State Normal were sailors, marines, and coast guardsmen with actual combat service but limited formal education. Many had only eight years schooling while only a few had any high school education. They enrolled in classes in mathematics, physics, navigation, principles of flight, aerology, aircraft engines, and communications which were taught by regular faculty members but were separate from the Normal's regular offerings. The Navy provided texts, syllabi, visual aids, uniform

³⁹[The Normal Quarterly of the State Normal College]. *Announcements For the Fifty-Sixth Year of the Louisiana State Normal College. Catalog, 1940. Roster of Students and Graduates For Year 1939*, XXIX (April 1940), 42.

⁴⁰Joe Farrar to Congressman Leonard Allen, November 27, 1942, Farrar Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁴¹Joe Farrar to Commander J.C. Webb, U.S.N.R., December 8, 1942, *ibid.*

⁴²*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, December 16, 1942, Bulletin 498 (John E. Coxe, 1942), 4.

⁴³John E. Coxe to Joe Farrar, December 19, 1942, Farrar Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; Sam H. Jones to Joe Farrar, January 19, 1943, *ibid.*; [Resolution], Rotary Club, n.d., *ibid.*; Joe Farrar to Senator Allen J. Ellender, November 8, 1943, *ibid.*

tests and examinations, and record cards and established a vigorous program of physical training.⁴⁴ Upon completion of their first solo flight, the Navy trainees were thrown in Chaplin's Lake by their buddies and later presented their wings at an official ceremony on campus. In April 1943 the first class of cadets at the State Normal graduated.⁴⁵

Considering that approximately six hundred navy men were almost continuously stationed from January 1943 to December 1944 on a campus where 90 percent of the student body were women there were surprisingly few serious problems or disruptions. The seamen had the use of campus facilities including the natatorium and attended college dances on Saturday nights. Although most resided in campus residences, some married sailors lived in town. President Farrar praised the general conduct of the men, but at the same time complained to Lt. Commander F.H. Mitchell, the local commanding officer, about a number of minor problems and aggravations. The navy boys were, at least in Dr. Farrar's opinion, excessively noisy going to and from town on Saturday nights, their free night, between 11 p.m. and 2 a.m. He asked that they refrain from loud talking, singing, whistling, and yelling so that others, including himself, could sleep.⁴⁶ A few months later, Dr. Farrar reported that "certain women" were attending the college dances who were neither sailors' wives nor Normal students. To eliminate the undesirable women, he instituted a procedure whereby the seamen's wives had to register with the college hostess and furnish her "with sufficient evidence of marriage" before participating in a college social activity.⁴⁷ In June 1943 President Farrar notified Lt. Commander Mitchell of faculty complaints concerning the "vile and vulgar" language which could be heard by persons in the Fine Arts building as the sailors walked from Caspari Hall to the natatorium.⁴⁸ He also threatened to prohibit the seamen's wives from coming on campus after eight p.m. to meet their husbands, since the "super-affectionate" married navy couples strolled the campus arm-in-arm and were giving the institution a bad name when some people mistook them for Normal students.⁴⁹

Lt. Commander F.H. Mitchell attempted to cooperate with the college officials in every way possible to eliminate the petty problems caused by the presence of the seamen. In June 1943 he issued orders that guests of all aviation cadets and airplane trainees would have to secure temporary passes from the officer of the day

⁴⁴Joe Farrar to Senator Allen J. Ellender, November 8, 1943, *ibid.*; Scope of Courses, Naval Flight Preparatory School Curriculum, November 26, 1942, *ibid.*; *The Natchitoches Times*, December 18, 1942; "Normal's Navy," *The Normal Alumni Columns*, III (November 1943), 6.

⁴⁵*The Natchitoches Times*, March 19, 1943, April 16, 1943.

⁴⁶Joe Farrar to The Chief of Naval Personnel, September 27, 1943, Farrar Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; Joe Farrar to Lt. Commander Mitchell, February 19, 1943, *ibid.*

⁴⁷Joe Farrar to Commander F.H. Mitchell, April 30, 1943, *ibid.*

⁴⁸Joe Farrar to Commander Mitchell, June 8, 1943, *ibid.*

⁴⁹*ibid.*



Naval Cadets

or executive officer to enter the station (Normal campus).⁵⁰ This would prevent the entrance of unauthorized persons on campus. The following month, after receiving a request from President Farrar, he issued an order that the naval personnel were not to litter the grounds with trash. If they persisted, Commander Mitchell threatened to "temporarily secure the sale of ice cream, etc."⁵¹ The Naval commander, on the other hand, asked President Farrar to control the speed of automobiles on campus "since men in formation" were limited "as far as dodging traffic, jumping while at attention, etc. is concerned."⁵²

Although he requested at one time that the Navy Department replace the enlistment personnel with cadets at the Normal "because of many unpleasant and undesirable problems on the campus and in the local community," President Farrar was very upset when he heard rumors in November 1943 that the Navy Flight Preparatory School would be discontinued at the Normal. He was especially concerned with the over-staffing problem the loss of the school would create.⁵³ Although that

⁵⁰Regimental Notice no. 84, Subject: Guests, June 15, 1943, *ibid.*

⁵¹Regimental Notice, no. 90, Subject: Ice Cream Cups, waste paper, etc., July 9, 1943, *ibid.*

⁵²F.H. Mitchell to Joe Farrar, July 27, 1943, *ibid.*

⁵³Joe Farrar to the Chief of Naval Personnel, September 27, 1943, *ibid.*; Joe Farrar to Senator Allen J. Ellender, November 8, 1943, *ibid.*

rumor was false, the Navy Department did decide to discontinue the Naval Flight Preparatory School program in its entirety the next year. The Normal president was notified that the last flight class would leave the Normal on or before November 16, 1944.⁵⁴

The loss of the Naval Flight Preparatory School was not as detrimental to the Normal as it could have been, because the college secured a second naval program, a Navy V-5 Academic Refresher Unit in July 1944.⁵⁵ Only eight colleges were selected to house V-5 Refresher units. Although smaller in number than the Preparatory Flight School, the Refresher unit was composed of men ranging from eighteen to twenty-six who had seen active service. They were all at least high school graduates and some had as much as two or three years college. Since the purpose of the program was to prepare the men to become officers in the United States Naval Reserve, the V-5 refreshers pursued courses in English, mathematics, physics, history, and naval organization as well as strenuous physical training. Instruction was given by twenty-one civilians and five Navy officers in classes separate from those of regularly-enrolled students. Upon the basis of testing the cadets were trained for either eight, sixteen, or twenty-four weeks. Every eight weeks a new contingent arrived. Unlike the Flight Preparatory School trainees, the men received college credit for their work and were permitted to engage in campus activities including athletics, music and drama productions, and debating as well as weekly dances at the Student Center on Saturday nights.⁵⁶ The Navy Academic Refresher unit continued until December 1945 when it was disbanded on college campuses after the surrender of Japan.⁵⁷

By December 1945 when the last navy boys left Northwestern State College, over two thousand men, including 779 in the V-5 Refresher Unit, had been trained on the college campus. In thanking President Farrar for his cooperation and hospitality, Lt. Richard B. Davis, commander of the Refresher unit, succinctly summarized the naval cadets on the Northwestern campus.

Every state, every economic level, education ranging from 8 grades (in the NFPS) to three years of college, was represented among them. They came straight from school or after as much as nine years in the Navy. They were taught in your classrooms and gymnasiums, they slept in your dormitories, they courted (and sometimes married) your women students. They left here

⁵⁴Rear Admiral L.E. Denfeld to Joe Farrar, April 5, 1944, *ibid.*

⁵⁵*The Current Sauce*, July 1, 1944, September 16, 1944.

⁵⁶*Northwestern State College Quarterly, Catalogue Issue, 1944-1945*, XXXIV (April 1945), 23-24; *The Current Sauce*, July 1, 1944.

⁵⁷Rear Admiral William M. Fechteler to Joe Farrar, September 17, 1945, Uncatalogued Presidential Papers, July 1, 1945-June 30, 1946, University Archives, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana; cited hereafter as A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *The Current Sauce*, December 15, 1945.

well equipped to carry on the next stage of their training.⁵⁸

One of the reasons President Farrar wanted to obtain the naval units was to utilize the college's vast physical plant. The declining enrollment, coupled with fixed expenses of maintaining the physical facilities, increased the cost per student at the institution. During the war years there was no major building construction at the college and none was needed. President Farrar did manage to renovate and repair extensively several older structures despite the war emergency. In 1941 dormitories "A" and "B," the Dining Hall, and the Boys' Shack were completely renovated with tiled baths added to the dormitories and cooling systems installed in the two girls' dormitories. Other buildings were painted and repaired, a concrete driveway laid in front of Varnado Hall, and four concrete lighted tennis courts constructed. President Farrar emphasized that all these improvements had been financed from the college's regular maintenance and operation budget and not from special appropriations.⁵⁹

In his budget request for the 1944-1946 biennium, President Farrar did ask for a capital outlay appropriation of \$375 thousand for the erection of a home economics building, a girl's dormitory, and a dairy. He pointed out that home economics was taught in cramped quarters in two buildings which proved unsatisfactory especially in light of expected growth in the curriculum at the war's end. In justifying the request for a girls' dormitory, the Normal president explained that Natchitoches was not a large enough town to house many students off-campus and that bus service to the college was not feasible in the sparsely settled area served by the college. He noted that campus facilities could house approximately five hundred girls but that in peacetime room requests could exceed eight hundred. The thirty-year-old dairy was poorly located, in a dilapidated condition, and not sufficient for planned expansion of the post-war agricultural program.⁶⁰ The State Normal received no capital outlay funds in its 1944-1945 and 1945-1946 budgets, so once again only repair and renovation work was done on existing buildings.⁶¹ Undaunted by his failure to obtain building appropriations, President Farrar announced plans for a building and improvement program totalling more than \$2.5 million in the fall of 1945. He proposed the construction of a dairy, home economics building, two women's dormitories, a social science and business building, and two men's

⁵⁸Richard B. Davis to Joe Farrar, January 2, 1946, Uncatalogued Presidential Papers, July 1, 1945-June 30, 1946, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U. The only other war-related program the State Normal College engaged in was a Farm Labor Training School begun in April 1943. *Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, April 5, 1943, Bulletin 502 (John E. Coxe, 1943), 71-74; S.M. Jackson to Joe Farrar, April 9, 1943, Farrar Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁵⁹*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, May 5-6, 1941, Bulletin 453 (John E. Coxe, 1941), 4-5; Joe Farrar, "Louisiana State Normal College," [1942], Farrar Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁶⁰*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, January 11, 1944, Bulletin 526 (John E. Coxe, 1944), 36, 46; Joe Farrar to C. Carter Brown, February 1, 1944, Farrar Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁶¹*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, August 1, 1944, Bulletin 536 (John E. Coxe, 1944), 38; *ibid.*, May 8, 1945, Bulletin 581 (John E. Coxe, 1945), 11; *ibid.*, July 6, 1945, Bulletin 583 (John E. Coxe, 1945), 33.

dormitories as well as the expansion and renovation of existing campus structures.⁶² Despite his announcement, the 1946-1947 budget included only twenty-three hundred dollars in the land and structure category and \$62,950 for major repairs.⁶³

President Farrar never attained his building goals at Northwestern State College. In November 1946 he suffered a serious heart attack which hospitalized him at Schumpert Sanitarium in Shreveport for three weeks. After his release he went to Jackson, Mississippi, for a few week's rest with his wife's family. At the time he planned to resume his presidential duties during the latter part of January.⁶⁴ On November 21, 1946, because of the emergency caused by Dr. Farrar's illness, Superintendent of Education John E. Coxe requested the State Board approve his recommendation of Professor A.C. Maddox as acting president. The State Board members agreed to the appointment of Mr. Maddox and later, on January 10, 1947, ratified their action in a regular meeting.⁶⁵ When President Farrar had still not returned to his duties by March, the State Board appointed a committee to visit him to discuss the state of his health and the possibility of his returning to the presidency of NSC. Less than a month later, on April 10, 1947, Dr. Farrar appeared before the board to present his resignation orally. The State Board accepted his resignation effective January 1, 1948, and granted him a leave of absence with full pay from July 1, 1947, through December 31, 1947. A second resolution adopted appointed a three-person committee to draft an appropriate resolution thanking Joe Farrar for his more than thirty years of educational service to the state including six years as president of Northwestern State College. All members present voted for both resolutions except Robert H. Curry of Haynesville who requested that he be recorded as not voting.⁶⁶ At the next board meeting, May 19, 1947, Mr. Curry moved that Joseph E. Gibson be elected president of Northwestern State College effective July 1, 1947. Mr. Gibson's appointment received the unanimous approval of the State Board.⁶⁷

Joe Farrar, considering that the World War II years paralleled most of his presidency, served the college very well. The declining enrollment and absence of new construction on the campus were directly attributable to the war and not to his administration of the institution. Most of his work was in the realm of strengthening academics. He worked diligently for the college's re-accreditation by the Southern Association and he planned the first administrative reorganization. New

⁶²*The Natchitoches Times*, November 2, 1945; Crew, "Northwestern State College," 68.

⁶³*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, May 19, 1947, Bulletin 626 (John E. Coxe, 1947), 24.

⁶⁴*The Current Sauce*, December 7, 1946; *The Natchitoches Times*, December 6, 1946.

⁶⁵*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, January 10, 1947, Bulletin 622 (John E. Coxe, 1947), 22.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, March 17-18, 1947, Bulletin 624 (John E. Coxe, 1947), 16; *ibid.*, April 10, 1947, Bulletin 625 (John E. Coxe, 1947), 7-8.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, May 19, 1947, Bulletin 626 (John E. Coxe, 1947), 1-2. *The Current Sauce* announced the resignation of President Farrar April 12, 1947, but not with much coverage. *The Current Sauce*, April 12, 1947.

academic curricula were added to the institution's offerings and a new name bestowed upon it during his years. Only in popularity, perhaps, did Joe Farrar falter. His relations with the students and townspeople were not as cordial as they might have been. His reserve was undoubtedly due partially to his own personality, but also to the political attacks that were targeted against him. His successor would be more popular, but would also resent the political interference he found at the college.⁶⁸

A.C. Maddox, head of NSC's Mathematics Department, served as acting president of the college from November 21, 1946 to July 1, 1947, except for a short time when President Farrar resumed partial responsibility. Maddox's appointment followed his participation in circulating a letter or petition resulting from a general faculty meeting in October 1946. The letter conveyed to Dr. Farrar, who was then ill, the support of the signers and decried political criticism of the college and the involvement of the townspeople in campus affairs. The *Current Sauce*, in two editorials, disapproved of the petition's circulation among the faculty for three reasons: first, a teacher's position should depend upon his ability to teach and not upon his political alignment; second, the petition represented a form of "subtle intimidation"; and third, it split the college faculty into two opposing groups. The college newspaper also expressed an opinion that, contrary to the petition's declaration, the local people should express an interest in the college's affairs.⁶⁹ The *Natchitoches Enterprise* also criticized the circulation of the petition.⁷⁰ By March 1947 Acting President Maddox was asking for the faculty's sympathy "in the next few weeks in what he termed an emergency at the local college."⁷¹ In the meantime, he directed the ordinary operations of NSC and even petitioned the State Board of Education, in the college's name, for exclusive authorization to offer a master's degree for teachers. The State Board decided to delay any action until it could study the request further.⁷² After the resignation of President Farrar on April 10, 1947, the anxiety at the college and in Natchitoches, if possible, increased in anticipation of who would be appointed his successor. The *Natchitoches Times*, in an editorial, "The \$59,000 Question" by Charles Cunningham, stated that the newspaper had "stood aloof from the cabals for or against President Farrar" and

⁶⁸After leaving Northwestern State College, Joe Farrar joined the administration of Delta State College in Cleveland, Mississippi, on July 1, 1947 as Dean of the Faculty. He served in that position ten years and later taught in the college's Department of Education until his retirement in 1962. Dr. Farrar died of a heart attack at Oschner's Clinic in New Orleans on August 1, 1965, at age 72 and was buried in Baton Rouge. Jack Winston Gunn and Gladys C. Castle, *A Pictorial History of Delta State University* (Jackson, Mississippi, 1980), 69; *Delta State Alumni News*, 2 (September 1965), 1.

⁶⁹The *Current Sauce*, November 16, 1946, November 23, 1946.

⁷⁰News release, *The Natchitoches Enterprise*, March 27, 1947, Uncatalogued Presidential Papers, July 1, 1946-June 30, 1947, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²R.R. Ewerz to A.C. Maddox, April 29, 1947, *ibid.*; *Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, March 17-18, 1947, Bulletin 624 (John E. Cox), 25.

refrained "from pushing any candidate in particular" to succeed him. However, the editorial continued:

There is but one simple issue to be settled: a man must be named to head our local institution, a man who can lead it to the academic heights, a man who can enjoy the confidence of the public of Natchitoches Parish and the surrounding areas, and who can merit the support of the faculty and student body.⁷³

The editorial pointed out the importance of NSC to Natchitoches in a cultural and educational sense but also from an economic viewpoint and noted that the incoming president would have to solve the problem of low enrollment at the institution. Pleading with Natchitoches Parish and Natchitoches to support the man chosen to head NSC, the editorial concluded:

So, when the State Board names the new president, let us get behind him mightily, support him to the fullest, make him welcome, and build up OUR college, Yes, it's OURS, and the Times can't see the sense of fighting and bickering and hurting OUR property.⁷⁴

Joseph Edward Gibson was born February 7, 1893, in West Point, Mississippi, to Robert Clayton and Tempie (Alexander) Gibson.⁷⁵ He attended West Point and Booneville (Mississippi) public schools and in 1909 enrolled at the University of Mississippi where he earned a B.A. degree in 1913. For the next seven years, with the exception of one year's military service in 1918, he was a teacher, principal, and superintendent in various Mississippi public school districts. In 1920 Joe Gibson became superintendent of the McComb, Mississippi, schools where he remained until 1936. Meanwhile, after studying at George Peabody College for Teachers, he received the M.A. degree from Teachers College, Columbia University, in 1927. The same year he became a member of the Tulane University summer school faculty and in 1936 left the McComb schools to become a professor of education at the New Orleans university. On leave from Tulane University, Joe Gibson served as Director of Higher Education in the Louisiana State Department of Education from 1941 to 1946. He then returned to Tulane for a year before becoming president of Northwestern State College in 1947.⁷⁶

In addition to his teaching experience, Joe Gibson was an administrator and scholar of some note. As Director of Higher Education, he initiated a Louisiana rural teacher education program and directed a survey of higher education in Mississippi. He also served as chairman of the Mississippi Committee for the Reorganization of the Administrative Structure of Higher Education, chairman of the Louisiana Commission for Teacher Education and Certification, and consultant

⁷³The *Natchitoches Times*, April 18, 1947.

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵*Who's Who In America*, 26 (1950-1951), 993.

⁷⁶Request For Information, Joseph Edward Gibson, July 8, 1953, Tulane University of Louisiana, New Orleans, Louisiana. Cited hereafter as Request for Information, Gibson; Joseph E. Gibson biography, December 17, 1953, News Bureau, Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana.

to the South Carolina Survey of Higher Education. He co-authored several elementary school text books, wrote articles for various state and national educational journals, and served as editor of *The Mississippi Educational Advance*. He was a member of many educational and professional organizations and served as president of the Mississippi Education Association from 1934 to 1935.⁷⁷

When President Gibson assumed his duties at NSC on July 1, 1947, he, like his predecessor, believed that the students' first priority was academics. In May 1941 President Farrar had warned the Normal students, "There is no royal road to learning. It takes work, it takes effort, it takes application, and, as much as I want you to have a good time, I think you need to remember that your chief responsibility here is to work."⁷⁸ President Gibson expressed the same sentiments when he addressed the NSC freshmen at an assembly in September 1947. "This college is a place of hard work — a place of studying, finding, and achieving higher successes and greater privileges in our world," he declared.⁷⁹ He also noted the importance of athletic activities and social gatherings to the college community but only as secondary to academics.⁸⁰ There was, however, a notable difference between the two presidents. Joe Gibson was more relaxed, more at ease with the students. He joked about being new on the job just as were the freshmen and he likened his bald head to the shaved heads of the "dogs" in his student audience.⁸¹ President Gibson's bald head became his trademark and the subject of many cartoons in the *Current Sauce*.

Despite his appealing personality and easy style, President Gibson did not begin his administration on a note of harmony. In fact, five weeks into the fall 1947 semester he was faced with the most serious student strike ever witnessed on the NSC campus. It began as a student protest against the suspension of two veterans for using profane language and making bodily threats against one of the proctors of the men's dormitories. The college discipline committee, based on a lengthy and full investigation of the incident, recommended that the two students be suspended for the rest of the semester. After meeting with student leaders who wanted the punishment lessened, President Gibson refused to compromise. A mass meeting followed at which the students decided to call a strike for the next day in support of the suspended students. At 8 a.m. on the strike day some six hundred students assembled in the academic quadrangle waiting for the class bell which was the signal for them to storm Caldwell Hall and prevent classes from starting. They nearly succeeded but some students remained in classes despite the disturbance.⁸²

⁷⁷*The Natchitoches Times*, May 23, 1947; Request for Information, Gibson; News Service Release, November 14, 1967, Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana; *The Times Picayune*, May 20, 1947.

⁷⁸*The Current Sauce*, May 1, 1941.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, September 13, 1947.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*

⁸¹*Ibid.*

⁸²*Ibid.*, October 18, 1947; *The Shreveport Times*, October 16, 1947; *The Natchitoches Times*, October 17, 1947; H. Lee Prather to President Gibson, October 16, 1947, Uncatalogued Presidential Papers, July 1, 1947-June 30, 1948, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

A second student assembly voted to continue the strike even though they were warned their class absences would not be excused, but they also elected a committee to confer once again with President Gibson. Although he refused to give in to the student demands, he did agree to hear all witnesses and review all testimony in the incident. He kept his promise, but after hearing everyone involved he decided to uphold the original decision of the discipline committee. Because of his fair-mindedness and willingness to look into the matter, President Gibson won the admiration and respect of the students who later at a football rally agreed to end the strike and give the NSC president a "vote of confidence."⁸³ Considering that during the height of the strike bedlam prevailed with a few students destroying property, insulting instructors, and forcibly removing students from classes in Caldwell Hall and the Science Building, the president's firmness yet fairness ended what could have been a dangerous disturbance. More importantly, it cemented a good relationship based on mutual respect and trust between President Gibson and the student body.

Joe Gibson's greatest contribution to Northwestern State College as president was his role in developing a pioneer collegiate nursing program. Although NSC had been authorized in 1945 to initiate a four-year nursing curriculum leading to a B.S. degree, within two years the college, according to its catalog, was offering only the first year of what was then called pre-nursing. The catalog of 1948, however, announced that NSC had plans to establish a full pre-professional curriculum with appropriate hospital affiliation.⁸⁴ Early the next year President Gibson explained the demise of the early program when he stated, "During one year a director was employed, but due to war conditions and other factors little progress was made."⁸⁵ The president and especially the newly-appointed Dean of Applied Arts and Sciences, George T. Walker, played key roles in reviving the nursing program at Northwestern State College.

The reinstatement of the nursing program at NSC resulted from problems encountered by five Shreveport hospital diploma schools of nursing in the years following World War II. The diploma programs at Tri-State Hospital, North Louisiana Sanitarium, Highland Sanitarium, T.E. Schumpert Memorial Sanitarium, and Shreveport Charity Hospital were experiencing dropping enrollments, difficulties in properly staffing their programs, and a general shortage of nurses. Realizing the seriousness of these problems, the Shreveport Hospital Council approached the Shreveport League of Nursing Education to study the feasibility of establishing a collegiate school of nursing. The Shreveport League, in coopera-

⁸³*The Current Sauce*, October 18, 1947; *The Shreveport Times*, October 17, 1947.

⁸⁴*Northwestern State College Quarterly, Catalogue Issue, 1946-1947*, XXXVI (April 1947), 57; *ibid.*, 1947-1948, XXXVII (April 1948), 59.

⁸⁵[Joe Gibson] to Eleanore Meade, January 21, 1949, Uncatalogued Presidential Papers, July 1, 1948-June 30, 1949, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

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tion with the Louisiana State Board of Nurse Examiners, contacted Julia Miller, Dean of the Emory University School of Nursing, to conduct a survey of the nursing facilities in the Shreveport area. In April 1948 Miss Miller canvassed the area hospitals, schools of nursing, and colleges, including Centenary College of Shreveport and Northwestern State College at Natchitoches. Based on the results of this exhaustive study, she recommended a collegiate school of nursing which, in turn, led to the establishment of a nursing program at Northwestern State College.⁸⁶



Nursing Students

Moving quickly, President Gibson and Dean Walker worked out a collaboration agreement between NSC and four Shreveport hospitals (Highland Sanitarium, North Louisiana Sanitarium, Tri-State Hospital, and Shreveport Charity Hospital) in which the hospitals agreed to discontinue their schools of nursing, recruit

⁸⁶Phyllis Graves, "College of Nursing, Northwestern State University, 1949-1979 (research paper, School of Nursing, University of Alabama in Birmingham, 1979), 2-3. Cited hereafter as Graves, "College of Nursing, N.S.U."

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students for the new collegiate program, and provide scholarships for nursing students. On its part, NSC agreed to offer a three-year diploma program and a four-year degree program in nursing. The college had complete control of the school of nursing including its curriculum, faculty, students, and facilities owned by NSC while the four participating hospitals provided the clinical experience areas required in the program. On April 11, 1949, the State Board of Education approved the collegiate course of nursing at NSC and the college began preparations for starting the program in September 1949.⁸⁷ Dean Walker, who was given responsibility for developing the program, worked tirelessly at his new task.⁸⁸ In September 1949 the NSC nursing program admitted its first class of seventy-seven freshmen⁸⁹ thus beginning what would become one of the college's most valuable educational programs in succeeding years.

In addition to new and improved curricula, President Gibson also recognized the need for new buildings on the campus because there had been no major construction since the end of President Fredericks's administration. The most pressing physical needs of the college were facilities to house the rapidly growing business and home economics programs.⁹⁰ Fortunately, in a special session in the spring of 1949, the Louisiana Legislature appropriated \$727 thousand in capital outlay funds for NSC.⁹¹ With these funds President Gibson initiated a building program that included a home economics building at an estimated cost of \$244 thousand, a business administration building at \$252 thousand, and a warehouse-storage building at ten thousand dollars. A new barn and repairs and improvements to Caldwell Hall and the library were also financed by the appropriation.⁹²

The next year President Gibson was again requesting funds from the State Board of Education and legislature for new construction, repairs and improvements to existing buildings, and campus beautification. His 1948 statement of capital outlay needs was extensive and included as major requests a science building, new dormitories to house three hundred women, new dormitories to accommodate three hundred men, reconditioning of existing dormitories, rebuilding and extension of dining hall facilities and the library-social science building, and the rebuilding of Warren Easton. Altogether President Gibson requested \$5,576,000

⁸⁷*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, April 11, 1949, Bulletin 663 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1949), 14-26; *Prepare to Become a Professional Nurse*, Northwestern State College, 1949.

⁸⁸George T. Walker was appointed Dean of Applied Arts and Sciences by President Joe Gibson effective May 1, 1948. George T. Walker to Marietta LeBreton, June 9, 1948, in possession of author; Janet Malone Norman, "The Development of the Nursing Program at Northwestern State University of Louisiana, 1947-August, 1951" (research paper, Northwestern State University, 1974), 11-13.

⁸⁹Graves, "College of Nursing, N.S.U.," 4.

⁹⁰President Farrar had recognized earlier the need for these two buildings but was unsuccessful in obtaining them.

⁹¹*The Current Sauce*, October 4, 1947; *Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, November 17, 1947, Bulletin 645 (John E. Cox, 1948), 16.

⁹²*Ibid.*; *The Current Sauce*, November 22, 1947.

and listed the science building, housing needs, and dining hall facilities, in that order, as priority items. The science classes, he declared, were held in a converted thirty-six-year-old elementary school building which was both inadequate and a fire hazard. More than half the students were living in sub-standard housing units while some 450 had not been able to enter NSC the previous fall because of lack of dormitory space. The dining facilities, which were the source of most student complaints, were designed to feed half the twelve hundred student enrollment and the equipment was worn out and obsolete.⁹³ As was expected President Gibson did not receive all that he asked for, but he did obtain an appropriation for the expansion and improvement of the dining hall but not the additional housing or science building.⁹⁴ He also received funds to remove Old Social, a wooden eye-sore on campus which housed religious organizations, to a new location where the first floor would be incorporated into a new brick religious center.⁹⁵ The new religious center building, costing approximately \$165 thousand and located across from the Fine Arts Building, provided rooms for the Baptist, Catholic, Episcopalian, Methodist, and Presbyterian denominations.⁹⁶ Construction of the Religious Center began during President Gibson's administration but by the time of its completion he was no longer at NSC.⁹⁷ At the State Board meeting of May 3, 1949, Joe Gibson submitted his resignation from the presidency of Northwestern State College effective July 1, 1949. His letter of resignation, dated April 23, 1949, stated that he was leaving NSC to return to Tulane University.⁹⁸

Undoubtedly the opportunity to return to Tulane University was appealing to the popular and successful NSC president, but evidence indicates that Joe Gibson left NSC also because he could no longer tolerate the political situation at the college. Among the political upheavals he became involved in was a serious confrontation with Dr. George S. Long, brother of the assassinated "Kingfish" and Superintendent of the State Colony and Training School. The controversy began when some NSC sociology students, who visited the Central Louisiana State Hospital in Pineville on a field trip, were so appalled at what they observed there that they wrote a letter to the New Orleans *Times Picayune* describing the deplorable situation at the institution. Dr. Long defended the hospital and, at the same time, attacked conditions at the college, including the alleged immorality of the stu-

⁹³ Joseph E. Gibson, "Building Needs of Northwestern State College of Louisiana, April 1948," Uncatalogued Presidential Papers, July 1, 1947-June 30, 1948, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

⁹⁴ *Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, April 11, 1949, Bulletin 663 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1949), 46.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*; *The Current Sauce*, October 16, 1948.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*; *Northwestern State College Quarterly, Catalogue Issue, 1947-1948*, XXXVII (April 1948), 26.

⁹⁷ *The Current Sauce*, November 12, 1949.

⁹⁸ *Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, May 3, 1949, Bulletin 664 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1949), 9.

dents. President Gibson defended the students' right to express their opinions to the New Orleans newspaper and Dr. Long continued his barrage of attacks on the college. *The Current Sauce*, under the title, "Memoirs of Recent 'Cold War,'" printed the correspondence of the several participants in the verbal warfare, and various state newspapers also covered the incident.⁹⁹ That politics was at the core of the attacks on NSC was clearly evident in an anonymous letter that Dr. Long received from a disgruntled faculty member criticizing the college's administration and containing such statements as "We need here (NSC) a Long administration" and references to the "Sam Jones gang."¹⁰⁰ President Gibson, who had tried to remain aloof from Louisiana politics, wrote Dr. Long explaining his position:

In conclusion, let me say that I have stood clear of partisan politics and have done everything possible to keep NSC clear of it. The faculty, students, and I resent the efforts by any and all political groups to make a football out of the college. The good name of the college and of its faculty and students need no defense. Every aspect of its administration and its program is open to inspection and criticism at anytime. We welcome public appraisal.¹⁰¹

President Gibson had obviously grown tired of the evil effects of politics upon his administration and the college's reputation and decided to return to Tulane University.

That Joe Gibson was a popular and highly-regarded president cannot be denied. *The Current Sauce* paid him a glowing tribute upon his resignation in an editorial which stated:

Most of us, however, for purely selfish reasons, can't help feeling a little let down at Mr. Gibson's going. In the two years that he has been on the campus, Joe Gibson has become something of a legend. We always thought of college presidents as aloof and pre-occupied individuals, hidden away in spacious offices and surrounded by secretaries and administrative heads — until we met Mr. Gibson.

It took us a while to get used to the idea that a student didn't have to go through red tape or repeat pass words to be admitted to the *inner sanctum* — but only a little while. Those friendly chats convinced us that the man behind the desk was on our side. We were a bit taken back the first time the president stopped us in the hall to tell the latest joke on himself, or popped up at our table in the student center for a cup of coffee. But we liked it. We admired a chief executive who would shed his dignity long enough to wear a wig in assembly, or participate in the informal shenanigans of a student party.

⁹⁹ *The Current Sauce*, May 14, 1949.

¹⁰⁰ Name withheld to Dr. George Long, May 24, 1949 enclosed in George S. Long to Dr. G.W. McGinty, June 23, 1949. Uncatalogued Presidential Papers, July 1, 1949-June 30, 1950, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁰¹ Joe Gibson to George Long, May 11, 1949 in *The Current Sauce*, May 14, 1949.

We liked, too, having a man in the president's office who could make decisions quickly and without fear. He listened to our problems, even the little ones, and he acted on them. In this age of passing the buck, that struck a responsive note. He encouraged stronger student government and more student participation in administrative affairs. He knew these things would make a better school and we believed they did.¹⁰²

The faculty also honored Mr. and Mrs. Gibson at a farewell banquet attended by 124 people and presented them with a complete set of sterling silver for eight.¹⁰³ President Gibson was popular among the faculty and each year of his administration gave them raises.¹⁰⁴

Once again, politics had been involved in the departure of an NSC president and some people expressed concern that the college was being hurt by politics, bad publicity, and the seemingly "revolving-door" presidency. Charles Cunningham, in an editorial in *The Natchitoches Times* entitled "We're Sick and Tired," expressed such concern when he wrote:

We're sick and tired of the ugliness and spite surrounding the presidency of Northwestern State College. . . .

We're sick and tired of the disunity plaguing our college. We're sick and tired of the bad publicity resulting from schemes and counter schemes. We hate to read such nasty accusations as Dr. George Long's, because true or untrue they give us a black eye. Parents don't forget them when they are choosing a college for their children.

We're sick and tired of rumors and rumors of rumors. We believe they're principally manufactured here for ulterior motives; they have a deadly effect in demoralizing the college. Let's scotch as many of them as we can.¹⁰⁵

Noting that every one of the last five presidents had to deal with administrative and disciplinary problems of a normal nature but also "with connivings and cabals intended to displace the president for some reason or other," Mr. Cunningham called upon his readers to support the new president "whether he be an administration man or a Sam Jones man, a Yankee, a Cajun, a local professor, or a Lapp."¹⁰⁶

The selection of Northwestern's new president, of course, was to be made by the State Board of Education. When Joe Gibson submitted his letter of resignation to the Board on May 3, 1949, it was accepted "with regret and with sincere appre-

¹⁰²Ibid., April 30, 1949.

¹⁰³Ibid., June 25, 1949.

¹⁰⁴Crew, "Northwestern State College," 72. Joe Gibson returned to Tulane University in 1949 as director of university development and in 1953 became director of pre-admissions. He resigned in 1958 to become president of Gulf Park College, Gulfport, Mississippi, where he remained until 1961. After his presidential term, he returned to New Orleans where he served as an executive consultant to the Edward G. Schlieder Educational Foundation. He died in Jackson, Mississippi, November 14, 1967 at age seventy-four. *The Times Picayune*, November 14, 1967.

¹⁰⁵*The Natchitoches Times*, May 13, 1949.

¹⁰⁶Ibid.

ciation for the success of his term as administrator of Northwestern State College."¹⁰⁷ Instead of naming a new president immediately, as had been the usual procedure in the past, the State Board appointed a committee of Eleamore Meade, Raymond Heard, Joseph J. Davies, Jr., Merle M. Welsh, and Robert H. Curry to receive applications for the presidency of NSC, investigate them, and make recommendations of an appointment.¹⁰⁸ At its next meeting on May 14, 1949, the board voted to have the previously named committee also select a permanent president for Louisiana Polytechnic Institute in place of Dr. Clayton Cottingham who was not reappointed.¹⁰⁹ Despite the responsibility of the committee, Mr. Heard of Ruston immediately moved the board into executive session where Mr. Fredericks, seconded by Paul B. Habans of New Orleans, moved that Dr. G.W. McGinty of Louisiana Polytechnic Institute be appointed acting president of Northwestern State College effective July 1, 1949. The motion was approved by a vote of six to four. The State Board, by the same vote, then proceeded to approve a motion by Mr. Heard, seconded by Mr. Fredericks, that R.L. Ropp of Northwestern State College be appointed acting president of Louisiana Polytechnic Institute effective July 1, 1949.¹¹⁰

The action of the State Board of Education on May 14, 1949, in temporarily filling the presidencies of NSC and LPI was unusual and received much adverse coverage in the state press, and subsequently an inquiry by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. *The Shreveport Times* in an editorial characterized the removal and replacement of Dr. Cottingham and the appointments of Ropp and McGinty "as brazen a bit of political thumb-nosing at educational welfare as has taken place in Louisiana in many a day." The newspaper attributed the "college switch" to the desire of the Long administration's six member majority on the State Board to assure one of the presidencies for A.A. Fredericks, a member of the board and executive secretary to Governor Earl K. Long, if he should want it in the future. According to the editorial, board members Heard, Davies, Welsh, Fredericks, Habans, and Isom Guillory of Eunice voted for the changes in the college presidencies while Meade, Curry, George Madison of Bastrop and Bronier Thibaut of Napoleonville voted negatively with one member, Parrish Fuller of Oakdale, absent. The newspaper also pointed out that Raymond Heard was the brother-in-law of Dr. McGinty, that no charges were made against Dr. Cottingham, and that the ousted president was given no hearing by the board.¹¹¹ The dismissal of the Tech president also came to the attention of the Southern Association which in a letter of June 1 written by M.C. Huntley, executive secretary, warned the State

¹⁰⁷*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, May 3, 1949, Bulletin 664 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1949), 9.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., 32.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., May 14, 1949, Bulletin 665 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1949), 29.

¹¹⁰Ibid., 28-29.

¹¹¹*The Shreveport Times*, May 17, 1949.

Board that it might be necessary for the association to investigate the ouster of Dr. Cottingham and requested a statement of the reasons for his dismissal. The State Board deferred any action on Huntley's request, except to have Shelby M. Jackson acknowledge it, until their next meeting. At the same time the board delayed approval of the state colleges' budgets until, in Fredericks's words, it could "ask the college presidents to get down to something reasonable." Using Northwestern as an example of over-staffing and excessive costs, he pointed out that the college's payroll included one employee for every two students in the previous spring semester. The college authorities subsequently denied this statement.¹¹²

The Shreveport Times continued to editorialize against the political intrigue involved in the removal of Dr. Cottingham and the appointment of the two acting presidents. "It stems back of course, to the desire of Fredericks to get back into a college presidency himself, to the desire of Raymond Heard to get his brother-in-law into a college presidency, and to the desire of Fredericks *et al.* to dominate state college education in Louisiana politically," declared the newspaper.¹¹³ Meanwhile, the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the Southern Association which had begun an investigation met with the State Board to discuss tenure in Louisiana colleges and "certain charges made in the press and otherwise concerning Louisiana Polytechnic Institute and Northwestern State College. . . ."¹¹⁴ In December the commission announced its decision "that disciplinary action in connection with any of the colleges under the direction of the Board would not be justified," although it did recommend that the State Board follow the principles of tenure in dismissing college administrators even though such appointees had no legal tenure.¹¹⁵ Thus the board was exonerated of any wrongdoing and neither college was placed on probation or denied accreditation. However, as Charles Cunningham had pointed out earlier, the public charges and countercharges, whether true or untrue, brought bad publicity to NSC. Furthermore, G.W. McGinty began his acting presidency entangled in political turmoil which had an adverse effect on his administration of the college.

Garnie William McGinty was born April 5, 1900, in Ringgold, Louisiana. After attending the public elementary and high schools in Ringgold, young McGinty entered the Louisiana State Normal College where he studied math and science and was awarded the B.A. degree in 1924. He later earned an M.A. in economics from George Peabody College for Teachers and a doctorate in history from the University of Texas. He also did graduate work at the University of Chicago and Vanderbilt University.¹¹⁶ His professional career began quite early when at the

age of sixteen he became an elementary school principal and at twenty-one a high school principal. Four years later he entered college teaching and held a variety of positions including visiting professor at Western Kentucky College, assistant professor at the Louisiana State Normal College, and assistant professor at Louisiana Polytechnic Institute. In 1931 he became head of Tech's department of social science and in 1949 was given a leave of absence from that position to become acting president of Northwestern State College.¹¹⁷

Dr. McGinty was a distinguished Louisiana historian who authored several books, including a *History of Louisiana* which became the standard state history text for twenty years, and numerous articles in state and national publications. He was also actively involved in state historical organizations, serving as president of the Louisiana Historical Association and co-founder of the North Louisiana Historical Association.¹¹⁸

Garnie W. McGinty officially assumed the acting presidency of NSC on July 1, 1949, and served only until September 1, 1950. He was never named permanent president of the college. With the political controversy surrounding his appointment and his short tenure in office, Dr. McGinty was not able to accomplish much for NSC. Although some notable advancements were made, other goals were unfulfilled. A few days after taking office, in an address to the students President McGinty asked them and the faculty to work together. Although it would take time to put his program into effect, he hoped that with cooperation the result would be a better NSC, worthy of the taxpayers.¹¹⁹ Time and cooperation were the two luxuries that Dr. McGinty did not enjoy.

During President McGinty's brief tenure, the NSC nursing program gained great momentum. Two additional clinical campuses were added to the program with E.A. Conway Hospital in Monroe in August 1949 and Baptist Hospital in Alexandria in January 1950.¹²⁰ Enrollment in the nursing program increased dramatically to 171 in the spring of 1950 and 285 the following fall. In realization of the need for a nursing uniform, the first class of students was allowed to select the dress, cape, cap, and pin. They chose a blue-gray dress with a white collar and short sleeves cuffed in white and a full-length white apron over the dress. In winter a purple wool cape with white lining was worn. The simple cap was designed by one of the students.¹²¹

¹¹²*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, June 28, 1949, Bulletin 675 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1949), 67; *The Shreveport Times*, June 29, 1949.

¹¹³*Ibid.*, June 30, 1949.

¹¹⁴*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, October 31, 1949, Bulletin 691 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1949), 4.

¹¹⁵*Ibid.*, December 20, 1949, Bulletin 692 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1949), 3-5.

¹¹⁶Crew, "Northwestern State College," 75.

¹¹⁷*Ibid.*; "Garnie M. McGinty," *North Louisiana Historical Association Journal*, XV (Winter, 1984), iii.

¹¹⁸*Ibid.*

¹¹⁹*The Current Sauce*, July 9, 1949.

¹²⁰Norman, "Nursing Program," 14, 24; Graves, "College of Nursing, N.S.U.," 4.

¹²¹Norman, "Nursing Program," 33.

In addition to supporting the expansion of the nursing program, President McGinty renewed NSC's request for authorization to offer the master's degree for teachers in 1949, but once again the State Board of Education delayed action on the request.¹²² The following year his recommendation that NSC's department of aviation be discontinued obtained board approval.¹²³ The most significant development in curricula during the McGinty months was an agreement with the Department of the United States Army for the establishment of an anti-aircraft artillery unit of the Reserve Officers Training Corps to be effective in the fall of 1950.¹²⁴

While Dr. McGinty was acting president, several buildings begun under President Gibson were completed including the Home Economics and Business Administration buildings, the Religious Center, and a dairy. In January 1950 the State Board approved preliminary plans for a science building to house the physical sciences and in August authorized a building to house the ROTC unit.¹²⁵ President McGinty's other capital outlay building requests, totaling \$4,172,280 and including two men's dormitories, three women's dormitories, an addition to the science building, enlargement of the library, an agricultural and industrial building, and a nursery school went unheeded.¹²⁶ In fact, the State Board delayed approval of most of Dr. McGinty's requests whether they were for new buildings, repairs and improvements of existing structures, or curricula modification.

One of the reasons for the board's hesitancy in approving requests from NSC may have been the unrest on campus among the faculty and students. By September 1949 rumors were circulating on campus of new appointments and promotions, abolition of positions, and presidential opposition to juke boxes and dancing. President McGinty, declaring that he had not been aware of the campus unrest, denied the rumors and stated in an interview with the editor of the *Current Sauce*, "Had I not thought that this would be a great college, I would not have accepted the presidency, and I do not intend to make any faculty changes. . . ."¹²⁷ However, almost with the same breath, he announced, "It is to be assumed that I am making a thorough study of the overall administrative set-up of the college and if I find that improvements can be made, I shall recommend such changes to the board. Such

¹²²G.W. McGinty to W.R. Hudson, December 12, 1949, Uncatalogued Presidential Papers, July 1, 1949-June 30, 1950, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, December 20, 1949, Bulletin 692 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1949), 31.

¹²³*Ibid.*, April 14, 1950, Bulletin 702 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1950), 51.

¹²⁴Report of Northwestern State College to Shelby M. Jackson, July 1, 1949-July 1, 1950, 11, Uncatalogued Presidential Papers, July 1, 1949-June 30, 1950, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; G.W. McGinty to Shelby M. Jackson, March 21, 1950, *ibid.*

¹²⁵*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, January 24, 1950, Bulletin 703 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1950), 65; *ibid.*, August 15, 1950, Bulletin 713 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1950), 51.

¹²⁶G.W. McGinty to Members of State Board of Education, February 10, 1950, Uncatalogued Presidential Papers, July 1, 1949-June 30, 1950, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹²⁷*The Current Sauce*, August 23, 1949.

changes, if any should occur, will be made after careful deliberation."¹²⁸ In support of the president, the college newspaper urged the students to disregard the rumors and work with Dr. McGinty. "Cooperation is our best bet," declared the editorial.¹²⁹

Before the end of the 1949-1950 academic year, the NSC student body was so dissatisfied with President McGinty that they requested the Student Federation of Louisiana Colleges and Universities to investigate his administration. The S.F.L.C.U. was a three-year old organization representing the student bodies of Northwestern State, Louisiana Tech, Southeastern, Centenary, and Southwestern colleges, and Tulane and Louisiana State universities. Following a three-day visit to the NSC campus, Robert Wall, president of the S.F.L.C.U., filed charges against President McGinty and requested that "Dr. McGinty not be considered by the State Board of Education for reappointment to the presidency of Northwestern State College."¹³⁰ The charges, accompanied by notarized statements from several persons interviewed by Wall, were: (1) that President McGinty removed "competent, efficient, and dependable people" from positions at NSC, (2) that "students' rights and privileges" were disregarded and abused by the administration, (3) that the honor court's invitation to Mayor de Lesseps Morrison of New Orleans to speak at a convocation was withdrawn by President McGinty presumably for political reasons, (4) that student publications were controlled and censored, and (5) that attempts were made to "surpress the freedom of speech, press, worship" by instilling fear in the minds of some students by threatening them with dismissal and failure to graduate. Dr. McGinty did not answer the charges specifically but denounced them as the work of "irresponsible persons."¹³¹

The State Board of Education met on June 9, 1950, in Alexandria to hear the charges brought by the Student Federation of Louisiana Colleges and Universities against President McGinty. In a day-long open meeting the State Board heard testimony and evidence presented by the representatives of the S.F.L.C.U. and by Dr. McGinty. After a short executive session, the board announced its decision:

The Board finds that the evidence fails to show that the students' rights and privileges have been disregarded and abused by Dr. McGinty at Northwestern State College and that the evidence does not establish any facts or situation which would warrant any action against Dr. McGinty.¹³²

The decision in the form of a motion exonerating the NSC president was unanimously approved by the board.¹³³

¹²⁸*Ibid.*

¹²⁹*Ibid.*

¹³⁰*Ibid.*, May 6, 1950.

¹³¹*Ibid.*

¹³²*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, June 9, 1950, Bulletin 712 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1950), 3-4.

¹³³*Ibid.*, 4.

Although cleared of the charges filed against him, a little less than a month later, President McGinty resigned to return to his old position as professor of history and chairman of the Social Science Department at Louisiana Tech. Citing his wife's poor health as a reason, Dr. McGinty requested his resignation be effective September 1, 1950, although he agreed to remain at Northwestern until his successor was appointed.¹³⁴ On August 15, 1950, the State Board accepted his resignation and instructed the already-existing committee named to select a president of NSC to resume its work. Meanwhile, on September 2, 1950, the board named H. Lee Prather, Director of Athletics at the college, acting president.¹³⁵ At the time there were two leading candidates for the permanent presidency of NSC—Prather and Sylvan Nelken, head of the college's Department of Agriculture. Mr. Nelken had substantial support among the people of Natchitoches and Northwest Louisiana "as a man to bring harmony to the campus and restore the college's fast fast-failing prestige. . . ." The local Kiwanis and Rotary clubs, Graduate "N" club, the Natchitoches Parish Teachers' Association and the board of the Northwestern State Alumni Association endorsed Mr. Nelken.¹³⁶ At the board meeting of October 24, 1950, both men were nominated as president of NSC. Merle M. Welsh of Baton Rouge proposed Mr. Prather's name while Parrish Fuller of Oakdale nominated Mr. Nelken. By a vote of seven to three the Board elected H. Lee Prather.¹³⁷ Even though the *Natchitoches Times* had heralded the movement to have Sylvan Nelken named president, it seemed equally pleased with the appointment of H. Lee Prather. "Congratulations are in order for Northwestern State College for getting a man of H.L. Prather's calibre as its permanent president," began a front page editorial. Describing the new president as "a man of probity and integrity," "a good teacher and administrator," and "one who knows the problems of the staff and faculty at first hand," the newspaper pledged its support to "Coach" Prather.¹³⁸

H. Lee Prather was born on a farm near Odessa, Missouri, on October 1, 1886, to Chatham E. and Mary Susan (Ewing) Prather. He attended the Mayview and Odessa elementary schools and graduated from the Odessa High School in May 1905. Young Prather then entered the University of Missouri where he was awarded the A.B. degree in 1910 and the LL.B. degree in 1912. He also did graduate work at the University of Wisconsin in the summer of 1927 and the University of Missouri in the summers of 1919 and 1930. In 1953 he was awarded an honorary

¹³⁴G.W. McGinty to George T. Madison, July 15, 1950, *ibid.*; August 15, 1950, Bulletin 713 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1950), 98. Garnie W. McGinty returned to Louisiana Tech where he served as chairman of the history department until his retirement in 1965. He died April 22, 1984, in Shreveport, Louisiana after a short illness. *North Louisiana Historical Association Journal*, XV (Winter, 1984), iii.

¹³⁵*The Natchitoches Times*, August 18, 1950; *Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, September 2, 1950, Bulletin 716 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1950), 8, 11.

¹³⁶*The Natchitoches Times*, August 25, 1950, September 1, 1950.

¹³⁷*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, October 24, 1950, Bulletin 717 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1950), 14.

¹³⁸*The Natchitoches Times*, October 27, 1950.

LL.D. degree from Louisiana College. As a high school student he played his first game of basketball and while attending law school he coached the Columbia, Missouri, high school team. In 1912 he accepted a position as athletic director and teacher at Southwestern Louisiana Institute where he remained one year.¹³⁹

In 1913 Prather had come to the Louisiana State Normal School as athletic director and coach of the school's four major sports—basketball, football, baseball, and track. After twenty years, he finally obtained an assistant, Harry (Rags) Turpin, and later turned all athletics over to him except basketball.¹⁴⁰ For thirty-seven years Prather coached basketball with his teams winning nearly five hundred games. There were only two years when his basketball team did not have a winning season. In recognition of his great achievements, Coach Prather was elected to the Helm's Foundation Hall of Fame and the Naismith Hall of Fame. He helped organize the old LIAA (Louisiana Intercollegiate Athletic Association) and served as president of the later NAIA (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics).¹⁴¹ Although he was best known for his contributions to athletics, H. Lee Prather also served the college in a number of other important positions including Dean of Men, Dean of Students, chairman of the Discipline Committee, co-ordinator of Navy Programs, and professor of political science.¹⁴² These duties were in addition to his coaching responsibilities. Altogether, he spent forty-one years in the service of the Natchitoches institution.

When H. Lee Prather was elected president of NSC there was an almost audible sigh of relief on campus and in the Natchitoches community that the recent troubles of the college were over. "Coach" (as he preferred being called) Prather was the "Eisenhower" of the early fifties as far as NSC was concerned. A teacher and gentleman, a fatherly prototype, and a man of integrity, he was expected to heal the wounds of years of political strife and student and/or faculty unrest. Tall, dignified, and handsome, he was expected to restore quiet harmony to NSC and to refurbish its somewhat tarnished public image. *The Current Sauce* in an editorial, "The Best Answer," described succinctly what Prather's appointment meant to many in the college community:

The appointment of 'Coach' H. Lee Prather as permanent president of NSC is indicative of the fact that our college is emerging from the realms of political battles, student-administration dissension, and general dissatisfaction.

During the past months, the state papers and the College have been clamoring for the appointment of a capable man to this office, as an answer to the recent problems.

¹³⁹Crew, "Northwestern State College," 80; *The Current Sauce*, September 28, 1934; *ibid.*, October 28, 1950; *The Shreveport Journal*, n.d., clipping in Vertical File, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁴⁰*Ibid.*

¹⁴¹*Ibid.*; *Alumni Columns*, XIII (May 1954), 1.

¹⁴²*Ibid.*

Coach Prather is, we believe, the best answer. Here is a man who has for nearly forty years devoted himself in every way to the interests of Northwestern. Here is a man who understands us and a man whom we understand.

With the Coach as acting president, the College experienced a noticeable rise in school spirit and standards. It is our prediction that this is only the beginning of many benefits that will follow under his administration as permanent president.

We pledge our loyalty and active support to President Prather in making a bigger and better Northwestern.¹⁴³

President Prather's three and one-half years in office were more notable for restoring good will on campus than for progressive curricula development. The new military science program enrolled its first students in the fall of 1950 with one officer and five enlisted men on the staff.¹⁴⁴ By the end of the 1950-51 academic year 220 men had selected military training and the future of the program looked promising.¹⁴⁵ However, within three years the ROTC unit at NSC was in danger because of the small number of freshmen entering the program. The declining enrollment was due to the end of the Korean War and not to the internal situation of the NSC unit.¹⁴⁶

The other relatively new program, nursing, continued its steady development under President Prather. In April 1951 a clinical campus was established at Baton Rouge General Hospital and in 1952 at Central Louisiana Hospital in Pineville.¹⁴⁷ In 1951 a two-year graduate nursing program was added to the department's offerings, and finally on July 1, 1953, the Department of Nursing became the School of Nursing with Miss Hilda Burnham as dean.¹⁴⁸ The same year Shreveport Charity Hospital moved into new facilities and changed its name to Confederate Memorial Medical Center. Among its new accommodations was an educational building which housed offices, classrooms, a library, and a dormitory. By contract, NSC occupied the hospital's educational facility until 1962 when CMMC decided to initiate its own diploma program.¹⁴⁹

There was not much new construction at NSC during the Prather years. In February 1952 the NSC president requested \$1,626,360 in capital outlay funds for new buildings and major repairs. The most pressing need of the college, according

to him, was two men's dormitories to house four hundred students then being accommodated in substandard dormitories. The new structures would replace the five old NYA wooden dormitories and the "Brick Shack" while the Navy barracks would be converted to other uses. He also emphasized the need for a new biological science building to replace the old 1912 elementary school building then in use, and an addition to the library.¹⁵⁰ In June 1953 President Prather repeated his capital outlay requests and finally in October the State Board approved \$750 thousand for two men's dormitories, \$625,160 for a biological science building and \$217,360 for additions and alterations to the library building.¹⁵¹ In 1954 President Prather received \$94,150 to rebuild the Industrial Arts building which had been destroyed by fire.¹⁵²

President Prather would not be at NSC when the new buildings were completed; in October 1953 he reached the age of retirement. He wrote Eleanore Meade, president of the State Board of Education, requesting that he be allowed to remain as president until the end of the spring semester, or through July 30, or until the end of the summer session of 1954.¹⁵³ The State Board appointed a committee to study applications and to recommend a president. On April 5, 1954, Merle M. Welsh, chairman of the committee, reported that it recommended the election of Dr. John S. Kyser as president of Northwestern State College effective July 1, 1954. President Prather was given a leave of absence with pay from May 15 to June 30, 1954, with Dr. Kyser serving as acting president.¹⁵⁴ Although President Prather's tangible contributions to the college were minor compared to some other presidents, his administration was a peaceful interlude during which the college community could forget the past, work together, and plan for the future. In this sense, his years were extremely important ones for the future of the college.

Student life during the forties and early fifties varied almost as much as the men who held the presidential office. Even the enrollment fluctuated wildly during those years. From a high of 1,945 students in 1939-1940, the last year of President Fredericks's administration, it dropped to a low of 510 during the war year of 1943-1944. Fueled by returning veterans, the enrollment rose to 1,657 in 1948-1949 under President Gibson but dropped significantly the next year to 1,382 when President McGinty was in office. By 1950 the number of students again increased to 1,533 but then the Korean War caused another decline to 1,338 in

¹⁴³*The Current Sauce*, October 28, 1950.

¹⁴⁴*Ibid.*, September 16, 1950.

¹⁴⁵Report of Northwestern State College to Superintendent Shelby M. Jackson, July 1, 1950 to July 1, 1951, Uncatalogued Presidential Papers, 1950-1952, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁴⁶*The Current Sauce*, September 26, 1953.

¹⁴⁷Graves, "College of Nursing, N.S.U.," 4.

¹⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 5; *Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, June 12, 1953, Bulletin 778 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1953), 4.

¹⁴⁹Graves, "College of Nursing, N.S.U.," 9-10.

¹⁵⁰H. Lee Prather to Members of State Board of Education, February 25, 1952, Uncatalogued Presidential Papers, 1950-1952, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁵¹*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, August 7, 1953, Bulletin 780 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1953), 8, 55; *ibid.*, October 3, 1953, Bulletin 784 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1953), 55.

¹⁵²*Ibid.*, February 11, 1954, Bulletin 786 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1954), 6.

¹⁵³H. Lee Prather to Eleanore Meade, March 25, 1953, Uncatalogued Presidential Papers, 1953-1954, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁵⁴*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, April 6, 1954, Bulletin 787 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1954), 9. "Coach" Prather died at age seventy-eight on September 23, 1964, in Newellton, Louisiana, after an extended illness. *Alumni Columns*, XXIV (October 1964), 3.

1951-1952. By the last year of President Prather's administration, 1953-1954, the enrollment again climbed to 1,441, almost the same figure it had been in 1936-1937.¹⁵⁵ Interestingly, for the first time in the institution's history men outnumbered women in 1946.¹⁵⁶

Student activities gyrated almost as much as the enrollment during the years 1940-1954. During World War II many student activities were curtailed because of the national emergency. Among others, intercollegiate sports, publication of the *Potpourri*, dramatic and debating activities, and the a cappella choir, were temporarily suspended. The ban on intercollegiate athletic contests was ordered by the State Board of Education and applied to all six colleges under its administration and, at least on the Natchitoches campus, received no adverse student reaction.¹⁵⁷ Nonetheless, the absence of competitive sports and the college annual lessened school spirit on the campus. When the two popular activities were reinstated in 1944, the *Current Sauce* enthusiastically hailed their reappearance in an editorial entitled "The Lights Are On Again."¹⁵⁸ The same year the a cappella choir was reorganized after an absence of a year and a half. The departmental clubs continued to decline in numbers and activity during the war years with only a few surviving the period.¹⁵⁹ By 1947 there was a slight renewal of interest and several new clubs were organized. Meanwhile social fraternities and sororities and professional and honorary fraternities continued to enjoy widespread student support.¹⁶⁰ In 1943 two new academic activities were begun. In April, a Dean's List of 135 students who maintained a "B" average for the fall semester was released. It contained 106 women and 29 men with four students having a straight "A" average.¹⁶¹ In November 1943 the college held its first annual Honors Assembly to recognize students who excelled in character, scholarship, and leadership.¹⁶²

World War II also altered student life in other ways. Besides draining young men from the classrooms and adding naval trainees to the campus, the conflict enlisted strong support for America's fighting men from the college's coeds. Some knitted articles of clothing and made bandages while others enrolled in civil defense activities and war-related courses such as first aid and cooking. All were encouraged to write their men in arms frequently and participate in war bond and war fund drives.¹⁶³ Miss Esther Cooley, head of the home economics department,

¹⁵⁵H. Lee Prather to Dr. Clark L. Barrow, Uncatalogued Presidential Papers, 1950-1952, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁵⁶*The Current Sauce*, June, 25, 1946, September 28, 1946.

¹⁵⁷*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, January 11, 1943, Bulletin 499 (John E. Cox, 1943), 11; *The Current Sauce*, January 15, 1943.

¹⁵⁸*Ibid.*, September 23, 1944.

¹⁵⁹*Northwestern State College Quarterly*, Catalogue Issue, 1944-1945, XXXIV (April 1945), 36.

¹⁶⁰*Ibid.*, Catalogue Issue, 1946-1947, XXXVI (April 1947), 40.

¹⁶¹*The Current Sauce*, April 2, 1943; *The Natchitoches Times*, April 10, 1943.

¹⁶²*The Current Sauce*, November 27, 1943.

¹⁶³*Ibid.*, January 15, 1942, November 6, 1943.

was placed in charge of the college's war effort in 1942. She estimated that students had sixty hours of free time a week and urged them to devote one tenth of that time to war-related activities.¹⁶⁴ During the Third War Loan Drive of 1943 the three campus facilities (the training school, high school, and college) oversubscribed their allocated quota of forty thousand dollars. As recognition of their generosity and dedication, one of the bombers purchased by these bonds was to be named *Louisiana Normal*.¹⁶⁵ The greatest sacrifice, of course, was made by the young men who left the Normal to fight on foreign shores. In recognition of their sacrifices, the college, as a part of the spring commencement of 1944, honored its "Fallen Alumni" with a memorial service. Those honored included thirteen killed in action, five missing in action, and six held as prisoners of war.¹⁶⁶

The war and its aftermath, inflation, affected the college in still another way — rising student expenses. In 1942 the cost of attending the State Normal rose from \$138.35 to \$144.20 a semester owing to an increase in room and board charges. Realizing that some students would not be able to attend college because of financial reasons President Farrar introduced cooperative dormitories in the fall of 1942. Two dormitories, one of for women and one for men and each housing approximately fifty students, were made available at a cost of fifteen dollars a month or \$135.00 for a nine-month year. The fifteen dollar charge included room, board, laundry, and infirmary fee and five dollars of it (forty-five dollars for nine months) could be paid in acceptable non-perishable goods such as potatoes, eggs, or syrup. In return for the low charges, students were required to work forty hours a month in the cooperative dormitories and dining hall, but they could also receive other financial aid.¹⁶⁷ Claiming that the arrangement made it possible for any ambitious student to obtain an education at the State Normal, President Farrar pronounced the cooperative a success.¹⁶⁸ However, after two years, the cooperative dormitories were discontinued because of a lack of demand.¹⁶⁹ Meanwhile the expense of attending the college continued to climb. In 1945 the charges for room, board, laundry, infirmary, and student activities all increased so that the cost per semester of attending Northwestern State College was \$159.75.¹⁷⁰ Two years later there was another increase in student expenses to \$180.00 a semester. Room and student activities fees accounted for the increase.¹⁷¹ In 1948 the NSC student was again faced with rising costs for board, laundry, infirmary, student activities, and books amounting to \$199.25 a semester.¹⁷² In 1950 a milestone was reached when for the first time it cost a student (including books) over two hundred dollars a

¹⁶⁴*The Natchitoches Times*, November 13, 1942.

¹⁶⁵*Normal Alumni Columns*, III (November 1943), 2.

¹⁶⁶*The Current Sauce*, May 20, 1944.

¹⁶⁷*Louisiana State Normal Quarterly Catalog*, 1942, XXXI (April 1942), 23; *Normal Alumni Columns*, III (April 1943), 8-9.

¹⁶⁸Joe Farrar, "Louisiana State Normal College, Academic and Professional Improvements," Farrar Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁶⁹Joe Farrar to Mary Helen Hadwin, June 9, 1943, *ibid.*

¹⁷⁰*Northwestern State College Quarterly*, Catalogue Issue, 1945-1946, XXXV (April 1946), 32.

¹⁷¹*Ibid.*, Catalogue Issue, 1947-1948, XXXVII (April 1948), 34.

¹⁷²*Ibid.*, Catalogue Issue, 1948-1949, XXXVIII (April 1949), 37.

semester to attend NSC. Again the increase was in board, laundry, and infirmary charges. Also for the first time room charges were higher for women than men and varied according to dormitory. A male student paid a flat room rate of twenty dollars while a woman paid twenty-five dollars for a room in Varnado Hall and twenty-two dollars for other dormitories.¹⁷³

Student life and activities were still closely supervised by the college authorities in the forties and early fifties. The conduct expected of NSC students was clearly enunciated in the *Student Handbook* when it stated, "It is the earnest wish of the administration and faculty that the students maintain at all times high standards of decorum, as well as high standards of scholarship, and the College reserves the right at all times to ask for the resignation of any student who fails to conduct himself in a becoming manner."¹⁷⁴ To encourage proper decorum and scholarship, there were study hours, quiet hours, and closing hours for women living in dormitories. In 1942 women were allowed date nights according to their classification. Seniors were permitted Saturday, Sunday, and two other long (6:30-10:30) date nights and two short (6:15-7:45) date nights a week while freshmen enjoyed only Saturday and Sunday long date nights and one short date night. All women students had to be in their dormitories when they closed at 10:30 p.m. except when they were attending formal dances in the Student Center on Saturday nights. Students could not leave the Student Center during a dance or stroll on the campus or leave it during or after a dance. Automobile riding was restricted to periods of two hours duration between 2:00 p.m. and 6 p.m. and confined to a five-mile radius of Natchitoches on paved highways. Women students had to "sign out" when leaving the campus, attending night campus activities, going on a date night, or leaving for a weekend. No woman student was permitted to spend a night in town.¹⁷⁵ Penalties for violating the college's regulations included PLAIN or LIMITED campus and ABSOLUTE or STRICT campus. LIMITED campus confined a girl to campus but allowed her to participate in social functions, go to the Student Center, and receive callers in the social rooms. STRICT campus also confined a woman student to campus but it prohibited her from attending college functions except those covered by the student activity fee and receiving callers. A serious infraction of the rules, such as staying out of a dormitory all night, resulted in dismissal from the college.¹⁷⁶

The women students, as could be expected, considered the college regulations unreasonable and periodically protested them. In 1941 the freshman girls listed twenty-three regulations they disliked and nineteen rules they wanted put into effect.¹⁷⁷ The next year the Student Council recommended changes, principally liberalizing date nights.¹⁷⁸ Because of the student complaints or for other reasons,

¹⁷³Ibid., *Catalogue Issue, 1950-1951*, XL (April 1951), 33.

¹⁷⁴L.S.N.C. *Student Handbook*, 1942, 27; *Northwestern College, Student Handbook*, 1947, 24.

¹⁷⁵L.S.N.C. *Student Handbook*, 1942, 28-34.

¹⁷⁶Ibid., 34-35; *Student Handbook of Northwestern State College of Louisiana*, 1946, 66.

¹⁷⁷*The Current Sauce*, May 5, 1941.

¹⁷⁸Ibid., October 2, 1942.

by 1944 the social regulations for women had been liberalized slightly. The closing hour for residence halls was extended to 11 p.m. on Saturday nights and Fridays nights were made long date nights for all women students.¹⁷⁹ Men students did not protest the college regulations as much as women since the rules governing them were not as strict: only freshmen had to observe a closing time, and study and quiet hours in men's dormitories were less restrictive.¹⁸⁰

When a student committed a serious infraction of college regulations, the Discipline Committee heard his case and decided on the penalty to be imposed. For example, in 1941 the committee voted to suspend indefinitely a male student and two women students for leaving Natchitoches on two occasions and not returning until after midnight. President Farrar upheld the committee's decision but allowed the young man to return to NSC after only a week's suspension because he felt that he had fallen in with "bad company."¹⁸¹ In 1948 a couple was found by the night watchman in a cotton patch just west of the railroad tool shed about nine o'clock at night. Both students were asked to resign which they did.¹⁸² Although the instances of serious violations of the college regulations were few, student conduct sometimes worried NSC presidents. President Farrar, who served during the war and immediate post-war years, tried to suppress some of the new fads among students. In 1942 he spoke out against the growing practice of male students wearing hats in classrooms and auditoriums and condemned drinking among Normal students.¹⁸³ After the war, he observed that "the conduct of a few students on the campus has degenerated to or below the level of the conduct of some of our students in pre-war days." He condemned the practice of men and women students riding each other "piggy back" as they left campus and the habit of couples strolling on campus and downtown "with their arms around each other. While this level of conduct may be all right in some places and with some people . . . it is not desirable and should not be permitted on a college campus and especially this one," he observed.¹⁸⁴ In 1946 President Farrar urged the deans of men and

¹⁷⁹*Louisiana State Normal College, Student Handbook*, 1944-1945, 39-40.

¹⁸⁰L.S.N.C. *Student Handbook*, 1942, 45-47.

¹⁸¹Farrar Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁸²Uncatalogued Presidential Papers, July 1, 1947-June 30, 1948, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

¹⁸³Joe Farrar to Instructional Staff, January 7, 1942, Farrar Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; Joe Farrar to Mrs. J.F. Lout, December 18, 1943, *ibid.*

¹⁸⁴Joe Farrar to Deans Berry and Prather, March 25, 1946, Uncatalogued Presidential Papers, June 1, 1945-June 30, 1946, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

women to take strong disciplinary action against students who were drinking at football games, and the next year he again censored "public demonstration of affection between the sexes" on campus.¹⁸⁵ The NSC president obviously had difficulty accepting the changing mores of the 1940s.

By the end of President Prather's administration in 1954 Northwestern State College was exerting a "wider field of influence" in Louisiana education than it had earlier as a normal college. It was now a regional college composed of four schools — Arts and Sciences, Applied Arts and Sciences, Education, and Nursing. In the School of Arts and Sciences there were twenty-two curricula leading to a baccalaureate degree and five pre-professional programs. The School of Applied Arts and Sciences offered seven degree curricula and one two-year program. Since teacher training was still a primary function of the institution, the School of Education offered the largest number of curricula, twenty-five, leading to the baccalaureate degree. The newest school, Nursing, had two curricula — a degree program and a diploma program. In addition to the varied curricula, NSC had a campus consisting of 766 acres and more than fifty buildings. Its student enrollment, which had been a problem in the forties and early fifties, was predicted to increase dramatically in the next two decades.¹⁸⁶ Everything was in place for NSC to enjoy the greatest period of growth in its history in the next twenty years.

¹⁸⁵ Joe Farrar to Deans of Men and Women, November 2, 1946, *ibid.*, July 1, 1946-June 30, 1947, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *ibid.*, April 23, 1947.

¹⁸⁶ H. Lee Prather to Dr. Clark L. Barrow, February 18, 1954, *ibid.*, 1950-1952, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

"A NEW ERA"

In the late fifties, sixties, and early seventies, the Natchitoches institution enjoyed "a new era" of growth unparalleled in its past history. Modern administrative, academic, athletic, and dormitory buildings were erected among the older structures and in a new area west of the old campus. Curricula continued to diversify, especially with the establishment of a Graduate School in 1954. Beginning with a master's program, the first offered by a college under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Education, the graduate offerings soon expanded to include the Specialist in Education degree and in 1967 the Doctor of Education degree and Doctor of Philosophy degree in education. In recognition of its expanded curricula, public service, and research endeavors, Northwestern State College of Louisiana became Northwestern State University of Louisiana in 1970. More importantly, student enrollment rose dramatically, especially during the decade of the sixties. As with other educational institutions, much of the increase was due to the baby boom of that decade; some, however, was due to the renewed vitality of Northwestern. From 1954 to 1978, two presidents directed the destiny of the institution. The cycle of short-tenured presidents ended with the appointment of John S. Kyser in May 1954. Dr. Kyser served the college until August 1966 when Arnold R. Kilpatrick was named acting president. Dr. Kilpatrick then held the presidential position until his retirement in January 1978. Both presidents had enough years in office to engage in long-term institutional planning and, more significantly, direct those plans to fruition. They enjoyed the luxury of presiding over an educational institution during its years of prosperity and growth — a dream of every administrator but a realization of few.

When John Schnebly Kyser was named president of NSC, May 15, 1954, by the State Board of Education he was well-known at the college. He had already spent thirty-one years on the Natchitoches campus as professor and department head. Born September 18, 1900, to John Hamilton and Elizabeth (Shuman) Kyser on a farm near El Paso, Illinois, young Kyser attended the elementary and high schools of his small hometown. After high school graduation, he attempted to join the U.S. Navy during World War I, but was rejected because of his youth. In the summer of 1918, he entered the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor to study engineering. The following October, after having been refused enrollment in the ROTC because he had not yet reached the age of eighteen, John Kyser resigned from the university to join the Army Air Corps. The war ended just about the time he completed his physical examinations, so he returned to the University of Michigan in February 1919 to continue his studies. Having decided on a broad general education instead of engineering, he enrolled in the College of Arts and Sciences

where he chose a "triangular concentration on economics, geography, and history."¹ In 1921 he received an A.B. degree from the University of Michigan. He later spent two years, 1922-1923, and the summer of 1926 in graduate study at the University of Chicago, six months at the University of California at Berkeley in 1929, the summer of 1936 at the University of Heidelberg (Germany), and one year of study, research, and teaching at Louisiana State University in 1936-1937. That year he received the Ph.D. degree from LSU.²

While studying at the University of Chicago he met Edward Guardia, a member of the Louisiana State Normal College faculty, who invited him to teach summer school at the Natchitoches school. Accepting the offer, Kyser journeyed to the little Southern town of Natchitoches where he would spend the rest of his life. Joining the faculty as an instructor in June 1923, he rose through all academic ranks to full professor and in 1935 was named head of the Department of Social Sciences, a position which he held until 1954 when he was appointed president. During his thirty-one years in the classroom, Professor Kyser taught more than ten thousand students in geography, European history, economics, and international relations. Innovative in nature, he organized and taught the college's first audio-visual course and organized the first Louisiana Study Tour in 1935. A photographer of note, he made his own slides and movies for his classes. A strong proponent of general education, he created an introductory course in Social Studies for freshmen which was taught to several thousand NSC students. In addition to his on-campus activities, John Kyser was an outstanding speaker and distinguished scholar who held the presidencies of several academic organizations including the Louisiana College Conference and the Louisiana Historical Association and the chairmanships of others such as the Southwestern Division, Association of American Geographers and the Geography Section, Southwestern Social Science Association.³

Dr. Kyser's appointment was well received by the press and people of Natchitoches and Northwest Louisiana in general. In a prepared statement to the people of Natchitoches, the new president pledged to "give my unstinted effort to use whatever I may have of talent and experience for the greater good of our college and community." Noting that his community and educational service had always been a team effort with his wife, Thelma Zelenka Kyser who was a noted educator in her own right, he concluded by emphasizing "the fact that the campus and the President's home will be places where there will be no lapse in our old-time welcome."⁴ Describing Dr. Kyser as "a well-known Natchitochean" and an "eminent

¹*Who's Who in America*, 34 (1966-1967), 1200; Supplemental Information regarding the personal background of Dr. John S. Kyser, January 19, 1954, in possession of Mrs. Thelma Kyser; Mrs. Thelma Kyser to Marietta LeBreton, September 23, 1984, in possession of author.

²Personal data, John S. Kyser, Ph.D., November, 1967, in possession of Mrs. Thelma Kyser; *The Current Sauce*, April 10, 1954; *The Natchitoches Enterprise*, April 9, 1954.

³Thelma Kyser, KNOX Spotlight interview, October 2, 1984; *Alumni Columns*, XXXV (Fall, 1975), 4; Personal data, John S. Kyser, Ph.D., November, 1967, in possession of Mrs. Thelma Kyser.

⁴*The Natchitoches Times*, April 19, 1954.

educator," *The Natchitoches Enterprise* stressed his past service to the town and college.⁵ *The Natchitoches Times* also emphasized the Kysers' role in civic and educational affairs and promised the community's support in improving the local college.⁶ Several newspaper editorials noted that NSC was no longer the "political football" of the state's educational system. One editorial, "NSC Moves Forward," declared "The institution now seems to be on a more even keel than for many years. Peace and progress have replaced turmoil and threatened retrogression. May it always be that way."⁷

The most notable achievement of President Kyser's administration came a few months after he took office. In the summer of 1954 Representatives Curtis Boozman and Monnie Cheves introduced bill no. 343 into the legislature which authorized Northwestern State College to confer the master's degree in education. The bill passed the House by a vote of seventy-five to thirteen and the Senate by thirty-three to one; with the signature of Governor Robert F. Kennon it became Act No. 81 of 1954.⁸ The legislation resulted from a demand for a graduate program at NSC which preceded World War II. In the late 1930s a group of parish superintendents initiated action to obtain a master's of education degree in north Louisiana. At that time LSU was the only stated-supported institution offering a graduate degree to teachers who wanted to improve their education. In 1939 a motion to establish graduate work at NSC was introduced at a State Board meeting but it was tabled. After the war north Louisiana educators renewed their effort because of several changes in public education. First, state teacher certification beginning in 1943 required a bachelor's degree as a minimum level for the standard teaching certificate. Second, a uniform standard pay scale was adopted in 1948 which provided increments of pay beyond the two-year level. A teacher with a bachelor's degree almost doubled her salary and one with a master's degree received additional pay. The new pay scale made it financially beneficial for a teacher to pursue a graduate degree. About the same time Louisiana changed from an eleven-year to a twelve-year school system, thus requiring additional teachers with better preparation. Because of these innovations, the demand for graduate work in education became so great that many north Louisiana teachers pursued advanced degrees in Texas, Mississippi, and other neighboring states. School superintendents, principals, and teachers, supported by public opinion, felt it would be better for Louisiana school personnel to seek advanced degrees at NSC, the state's traditional teachers' college, rather than out-of-state. As a result of this widespread feeling in north Louisiana, Representatives Boozman and Cheves and Senator Sylvan Friedman initiated the 1954 legislation directing the State Board

⁵*The Natchitoches Enterprise*, April 9, 1954.

⁶*The Natchitoches Times*, April 9, 1954.

⁷Newspaper editorial, n.d., Vertical File, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana.

⁸*The Natchitoches Enterprise*, June 25, 1954; *Alumni Columns*, XIV (September 1954), 1.

of Education to take the necessary steps to establish a graduate school of education at NSC.⁹ After intensive study and planning by an advisory council (later the Graduate Council), the college authorities presented a proposed graduate program to the State Board of Education for its approval. On November 19, 1954, the Board tentatively approved the new program and the appointment of a graduate dean, effective December 1. Dr. Leo T. Allbritten, Dean of the School of Education for the last one and a half years, was named the first graduate dean while Dr. John A. Jones, Director of Teacher Training, replaced Dr. Allbritten as Dean of the School of Education.¹⁰ In the spring 1955, semester the first students enrolled in the new school; 152 young men and women registered for graduate courses. Dean Allbritten predicted that in the approaching summer semester the figure would rise to between three hundred and five hundred graduate students.¹¹

Since NSC had both a new president and a new graduate school, a two-day celebration marking the formal investiture of the one and the formal opening of the other was held. In the afternoon of April 1, 1955, The Graduate School was officially opened with appropriate ceremonies presided over by Dean Allbritten. Dr. John A. Jones presented a paper entitled "Teacher Education at Northwestern" before the main address, "The Widening Road Ahead," by Dr. T.M. Stinnett, Executive Secretary of the National Commission On Teacher Education and Professional Standards of Washington, D.C.¹² That night the college hosted an inaugural banquet for official delegates to the ceremonies and the institution's faculty. Dr. George T. Walker, Dean of Administration and Dean of the School of Applied Arts and Sciences, presided and Dr. Roger P. McCutcheon, Director, Program for the Preparation of College Teachers, Vanderbilt University, spoke on "Some Trends in Graduate Education."¹³

The following morning, April 2, 1955, John S. Kyser became the first president officially invested in formal ceremonies, an occasion which one observer called "the greatest event ever staged on the campus of the college."¹⁴ After a formal academic procession of faculty, participants, and official delegates, the inaugural ceremonies began in the Fine Arts Auditorium. Sixty-seven delegates from every Louisiana college, private universities such as Harvard, Emory, and Rice, and

⁹Dean Leo T. Allbritten, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 16, 1984. Dr. Allbritten served as Dean of the Graduate School for twenty-one years until his retirement in 1975. His dedicated work was largely responsible for the success of the graduate program. When Dean Allbritten retired, Dr. Thomas Paul Southerland became Dean of the Graduate School and Dr. Robert Alost replaced Southerland as Dean of the College of Education.

¹⁰*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, November 19, 1954, Bulletin 801 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1954), 5; *Alumni Columns*, XIV (December 1954), 1-2.

¹¹*Alumni Columns*, XIV (February 1955), 1.

¹²*Northwestern State College of Louisiana, Inauguration of John Schnebly Kyser as President of the College and Formal Opening of the Graduate School*, April 1 and 2, 1955, 9-29, 73; cited hereafter as *NSC, Inauguration of Kyser; The Current Sauce*, April 2, 1955.

¹³*NSC, Inauguration of Kyser*, 31-39, 74.

¹⁴Otis R. Crew, "History of Northwestern State College" (typewritten), 85.

state universities such as Michigan, North Carolina, and Virginia, participated in the ceremonies. Other delegates represented learned and professional organizations such as the American Chemical Society, the National Education Association, and the Association of American Geographers. Thirty-two additional colleges and universities who were unable to have delegates present sent their greetings to the new NSC president. The keynote address, "The College in Education Today," was presented by Dr. Doak Sheridan Campbell, president of Florida State University. After appropriate salutations to President Kyser from representatives of the students, alumni, faculty, and the State of Louisiana, Joseph J. Davies, Jr., president of the State Board of Education, officially installed John Kyser.¹⁵ In his inaugural address, President Kyser, while recognizing the past achievements of the old Normal School, stressed the need for the modern college to offer new specialized technical programs. "On the college campus, the key . . . is mutual respect for different kinds of accomplishment when built upon a foundation in which the curricular bricks have a mortar of common interest." At the same time he balanced the new practical education with the need for a well-rounded liberal arts foundation for all students when he proclaimed, "The world is full of well-trained but poorly educated people." Analyzing the college's role in preparing the "educated person," he declared "A college curriculum that does not provide youth with at least exposure to the intellectual attainments and enduring values of our human kind does not deserve the label of higher education." Referring to the unfortunate conflict between pedagogy and learning that had marred professional education in recent years, Dr. Kyser pledged that "we here at Northwestern State College will do our utmost to achieve a vital blending of learning and method."¹⁶ The morning inaugural ceremonies were followed by a luncheon for official delegates and faculty which terminated the two-day celebration. Throughout the two event-filled days academics had been foremost and this would carry over into the new president's administration.

In May 1956 the first seventeen students were awarded master's degrees from NSC and by the summer graduation of 1957 the number rose to one hundred graduates.¹⁷ At that time the college was only authorized to grant the Master of Arts in Education in the fields of English, music, social science, and speech; the Master of Science in Education in the fields of biological science, business, health and physical education, home economics, industrial education, mathematics, and physical science; and the Master of Education to majors in education.¹⁸ From the

¹⁵*NSC, Inauguration of Kyser*, 43-59, 76-81.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 61-68.

¹⁷*Alumni Columns*, XV (May 1956), 1; *ibid.*, XVII (September 1957), 1.

¹⁸John S. Kyser to Members of the State Board of Education enclosing "Proposed Modification of Programs For the Master of Arts and Master of Science Degrees," January 20, 1958, John S. Kyser Papers, University Archives, Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana.

beginning the goal of the graduate program in education was to improve instruction in the public schools. The Graduate Council felt that to improve classroom instruction the teacher needed two things: a greater breadth of subject matter knowledge and a better ability to instruct students at the adolescent age level. As a result, NSC offered a well-balanced program of both subject matter and educational courses to classroom teachers. A teacher pursued twelve hours in education courses, twelve hours in subject matter courses, and six additional hours in either area, split between the two, or in writing a thesis. In reality, the program allowed a teacher to major either in education or a subject matter area. A high school teacher had to pursue a subject matter concentration since the college did not offer initially a degree in secondary education.¹⁹ The soundness of the graduate program was recognized by appropriate accrediting agencies, such as the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, the Southern Association, and later NCATE, which approved them. Within the state the master's programs in education were so well received by teachers that NSC had more master's students in education than LSU when only the two institutions were offering the degrees. Another indication of the outstanding quality of NSC's graduate educational programs was the demand for NSC personnel to serve as consultants to other colleges establishing graduate study. Never satisfied with the status quo, President Kyser and Dean Allbritten attended numerous meetings throughout the nation seeking ideas to improve NSC's program and brought outstanding educators to the campus to strengthen the program.²⁰ The total commitment of both men coupled with an academically sound program gained national recognition.

One result of the popular educational graduate program was a proliferation of graduate degrees. From 1954 to 1957 there was such a heavy demand for graduate work in the academic disciplines by secondary teachers that participating academic departments developed a graduate faculty qualified to offer master's degrees outside of education. No additional faculty was required to offer master's degrees in arts and sciences. The obvious success of the graduate program in education and the presence of a qualified graduate faculty convinced President Kyser to seek the State Board's approval for master's degrees in fields outside of education. On December 17, 1957, the State Board approved the college's request²¹ and NSC began granting the Master of Arts degree in English, geography, history, social sciences, and speech, and the Master of Science degree in bacteriology, botany, chemistry, mathematics, and zoology.²² In 1963 the program expanded to include the master's of business administration.²³

¹⁹Dean Leo T. Allbritten, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 16, 1984.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Shelby M. Jackson to John S. Kyser, December 26, 1957, Kyser Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

²²John A. Kyser to Members of State Board of Education enclosing "Proposed Modification of Programs For the Master of Arts and Master of Science Degrees," January 20, 1958, *ibid.*

²³Dean Leo T. Allbritten, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 16, 1984.

President Kyser was only partially successful in seeking authorization for new undergraduate programs from the State Board. At the same time he requested the new graduate programs, he sought authorization to inaugurate selected undergraduate programs in engineering. Pointing out that NSC had been requesting engineering programs for some twenty years and that modern society demanded larger numbers of technically trained people, Dr. Kyser argued that NSC was already offering pre-engineering work and had an outstanding Department of Industrial Education.²⁴ His arguments were not heeded and NSC did not receive an engineering program. On the other hand, President Kyser did obtain approval of a special education program in 1955²⁵ and a wildlife management curriculum and a separate department of bacteriology in 1960.²⁶

Academics were emphasized during the Kyser years in ways other than new or expanded programs. Early in 1960 the Northwestern State College Foundation was established "to promote the educational and general welfare of Northwestern State College; to afford financial assistance to students, sponsor research, and advanced study; to solicit, receive, and administer contributions which will be employed toward the benefit of the College, its faculty, and its students; and to interpret the aims, objectives, and needs of the College." C.O. Holland of Minden served as the first president of the foundation which immediately began a fund drive.²⁷ At the same time alumni chapters were established in all major cities of Louisiana, some of the smaller towns, and some out-of-state cities.²⁸

On the campus academics were supported by the creation of the Louisiana Studies Institute and the introduction of closed circuit television for teaching. In 1961 the Louisiana Studies Institute, the idea of Yvonne Phillips, head of the Social Science Department, was founded to foster research and publication of studies "that contribute to a greater knowledge and appreciation of the Louisiana scene." Among the projects envisioned by the institute were the publication of an official journal, *Louisiana Studies*, the writing of original histories and studies, and the collection of manuscripts, documents, photographs, taped interviews, and other materials dealing with Louisiana. Dr. George A. Stokes, professor of geography and geology, was appointed director of the institute.²⁹ The first issues of *Louisiana Studies* were well received and the institute quickly began a second project, a photographic collection, which evolved into one of the finest of its kind in the state.³⁰ Yet another first in academic support was the introduction of closed circuit

²⁴John S. Kyser to Members of State Board of Education, January 20, 1958, Kyser Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

²⁵*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, August 29, 1955, Bulletin 816 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1955), 9-10.

²⁶*Ibid.*, July 29, 1960, Bulletin 922 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1960), 5, 38.

²⁷*Alumni Columns*, XX (September 1960), 4; *ibid.*, XXI (January 1962), 1.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 1960-1963.

²⁹*The Natchitoches Enterprise*, December 28, 1962; *Alumni Columns*, XXI (January 1962), 4.

³⁰*Ibid.*, XXII (January 1963), 3.

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television for teaching at NSC. The college's pioneer television instructional program, especially English courses taught by Ora Williams, was the first use of the electronic media in teaching at any institution of higher education in Louisiana.³¹

With the introduction of graduate studies and other innovative programs, enrollment at NSC began to climb. Increasing from 1,688 to 5,203 students during the Kyser years, the enlarged student body put a strain on the physical facilities of the college. To relieve overcrowding, President Kyser secured more than \$19 million for new instructional buildings and housing units.³² At times he fought bitterly for appropriations and was frustrated when he failed. In 1955, for example, he wrote an angry letter to Governor Robert Kennon who had vetoed the capital outlay proposals for Northwestern and Southeastern colleges. Emphasizing the needs of the college and expressing the opinion that the governor had received "un-informed or prejudiced" counsel, the NSC president concluded, "... it is soul searing to see the effect on an institution which is beginning to have new life after years of neglect and inaction. Nothing much worse than the selective veto could have happened to us at this time. I beseech you to veto the veto."³³

Despite disappointments such as the governor's veto, President Kyser was successful in expanding the college's physical plant. In the summer of 1955 construction began on a men's dormitory to house 254 students. Considering that no campus housing had been erected since 1945 and that the fall enrollment of 1955 increased 30.5 percent over the previous fall, the need for additional dormitory space was pressing. The new dormitory, Prudhomme Hall, was opened in the fall of 1956 and immediately filled to capacity.³⁴ In 1957 Russell Library was undergoing expansion and renovation, a new biology building was under construction, and rooms accommodating forty-five men were being readied in the football stadium.³⁵ Yet with the exception of the new dorm and biology building, these were temporary stopgap measures to meet immediate needs; they would not sustain a continued growth of the college.

President Kyser recognized the permanent needs of the college and in 1956 estimated that NSC required \$9,975,000 in capital outlay for the construction and renovation of buildings. Among the new structures he proposed were an administration building, agriculture coliseum, dormitories for men and women, educational, recreational, and dormitory buildings for nursing students, a museum building, nursery school building, social sciences building, and a special education building. He also recommended that almost every other major building on campus

³¹Ibid., XXII (December 1962), 2; XXIV (March 1965), 2.

³²Ibid., XXXV (Fall, 1975), 4.

³³John S. Kyser to Governor Robert F. Kennon, June 13, 1955, Kyser Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.

³⁴*Alumni Columns*, XV (September 1955), 1; *ibid.*, XV (October 1955), 1; *Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, February 3, 1956, Bulletin 821 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1956), 16.

³⁵*Alumni Columns*, XVII (September 1957), 1.

A New Era



Modern Dorms



Kyser Hall

be renovated and/or expanded.³⁶ Four years later, in 1960, President Kyser again listed the capital outlay needs of NSC totaling \$4,950,000 and including men's housing, student center, coliseum, administration-classroom building, new elementary school, and a dormitory building for nursing students at Baton Rouge. His estimate again included major repairs to existing buildings.³⁷ Meanwhile the college's enrollment continued to spiral upward with an increase of 43 percent between the fall semester of 1957 and the fall semester of 1961.³⁸ By 1963 President Kyser estimated the capital outlay needs of NSC at \$8.5 million for a general classroom building, library, agriculture building, teacher education-psychology building, women's physical education facility, and extensions to Williamson Hall and the Industrial Education building.³⁹

Although President Kyser was not successful in securing funding for all the capital outlay projects he envisioned, he built much of the modern campus. Among the dormitories and dining facilities constructed during his administration were Prudhomme Hall (1956), Natchitoches Hall (1958), St. Denis Dining Hall (1958), West Caspari Hall (1959), Caddo Hall (1961), Louisiana Hall (1963), Bossier Hall (1963), Sabine Hall (1966), Rapides Hall (1966), and Iberville Dining Hall (1966). Williamson Hall (1958), Prather Coliseum (1963), Roy Hall (1964), and nursing facilities in Shreveport (1963) were also erected. Other buildings begun during President Kyser's administration were completed under President Arnold Kilpatrick. Straddling the administrations of the two presidents were Kyser Hall (1968) and the Student Union (1966).⁴⁰ Funding for the new construction came from two principal sources: state appropriations and loans from the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency. The H.H.F.A. loans were used for the construction of dormitories and dining facilities and were to be paid off with interest from revenues from the occupancy of the dormitories.⁴¹ This method of financing proved sound as long as occupancy of the dormitories remained high but in the 1970s when dormitory residency dropped drastically due to a State Board ruling that undergraduates did not have to live on campus and the loss of students to the newly created branches of LSU at Shreveport and Alexandria, repayment of the loans and interest became a serious problem for university authorities.

³⁶*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, April 28, 1956, Bulletin 928 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1956), 179-90.

³⁷*Ibid.*, May 6, 1960, Bulletin 918 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1960), 23.

³⁸Northwestern State College, "Institutional Self-Study Report To The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools," 1964, 42. Cited hereafter as "Southern Association Report."

³⁹*Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, December 13, 1963, Bulletin 1018 (Shelby M. Jackson, 1963), 245.

⁴⁰"Southern Association Report," 1964, 132-33; *ibid.*, 1975, 263-65. Only major buildings erected are listed. Sabine, Rapides, and Iberville halls actually opened after Dr. Kilpatrick had become president.

⁴¹*Alumni Columns*, XVI (January 1957), 1; *ibid.*, XIX (November 1959), 1; *ibid.*, XIX (February 1960), 1; *ibid.*, XXIV (April 1965), 1. Between January 1960 and April 1970, the college issued bonds in the amount of \$12,542,000. "Southern Association Report," 1975, 116.

In the midst of the construction boom and spiraling enrollments, Northwestern State College reached another milestone, its diamond jubilee. In 1959 the college climaxed seventy-five years of educational service to the people of Louisiana with an appropriate celebration. Jubilee week, May 3-9, 1959, was filled with academic and entertainment events for students, faculty, friends of the college, and educators from throughout north Louisiana. Among the highlights of the special week were a two-day educational conference, unveiling of the Demon's head in front of the men's gymnasium, formal opening of the George Williamson Museum in Guardia Hall, dedication of Williamson and Natchitoches halls, a jubilee banquet, and a pageant, "Through the Columns." Most notable among the activities were the conference and pageant. The educational conference, featuring a keynote address by Dr. John Tyler Caldwell, president of the University of Arkansas, and discussion groups on problems of contemporary education, attracted hundreds of educational leaders from eighteen north Louisiana parishes to the campus.⁴² The pageant, written by Mrs. Thelma Z. Kyser and directed by Edna West, portrayed humorous and serious incidents from the college's past. The cast included over two hundred members, mainly students with many in costumes from earlier periods and President Kyser, Dean Allbritten and Mrs. Edith Cote, the first student to receive a master's degree at NSC, appearing as themselves.⁴³ The weeklong celebration was well received and was a fitting tribute to NSC's first three-quarters of a century.

In 1965 President Kyser reached a milestone in his own career — the age of retirement. Having good health and feeling that he had more to contribute to the development of the college, he petitioned the State Board of Education to allow him to continue as president during the 1966-1967 fiscal year.⁴⁴ The board granted his request,⁴⁵ but six months later, in May 1966, President Kyser asked the board to modify its decision by granting him a leave of absence with pay from the end of the 1966 summer session to July 1, 1967. The board again acquiesced in his request and named Arnold R. Kilpatrick, Dean of the College, acting president from August 15, 1966, until July 1, 1967, when he would become president.⁴⁶ In

⁴²Northwestern State College of Louisiana, Jubilee Week Program, May 3-9, 1959; Northwestern State College of Louisiana, Diamond Jubilee Educational Conference Program, Kyser Papers, University Archives, A.D., E.P.W.M.L., N.S.U.; *The Shreveport Times*, May 3, 1959, May 8, 1959; *The Natchitoches Enterprise*, May 7, 1959.

⁴³*The Shreveport Times*, May 3, 1959; *The Natchitoches Enterprise*, May 7, 1959.

⁴⁴*Proceedings of State Board of Education*, November 20, 1965, Bulletin 1053 (State Board of Education, 1965), 4, 16.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*

⁴⁶*Ibid.*; May 6, 1966, Bulletin 1086 (State Board of Education, 1966), 4, 23-24. On February 26, 1966, Dr. Kilpatrick had been appointed Dean of the College effective March 10, 1966, by the State Board of Education. *Ibid.*, February 26, 1966, Bulletin 1062 (State Board of Education, 1966), 8. Dean of the College was a new position that had been created under State Board authorization January 8, 1966. *Ibid.*, January 8, 1966, Bulletin 1059 (State Board of Education, 1966), 8.



Demon's Head

a resolution the State Board recognized Dr. Kyser's "forty-four years of dedicated and successful service to the cause of higher education in Louisiana, not only in his capacity as a professor, but also as an administrator in Northwestern State College."⁴⁷ Although John Kyser had a tremendous impact on Louisiana education in general, his greatest contributions were to Northwestern State College. As a professor and department head he touched the lives of thousands of students; as president he guided the college to academic excellence in its undergraduate programs, installation of a graduate school, and expansion of the physical plant. His commitment to NSC was total and the college benefited in many ways from having his services for forty-four years.⁴⁸

Arnold Roy Kilpatrick was born August 5, 1920, to Luther Lonnie and Blanche (Burkett) Kilpatrick in Eros, Louisiana.⁴⁹ After attending local elementary and high schools, in 1938 Arnold entered Northeast Junior College. In 1941 he transferred to the Louisiana State Normal College where he received a B.A. degree two years later. After graduation Kilpatrick served in the military as an Air Force weather observer and forecaster from 1942 to 1946. Upon returning to civilian life in 1946, he secured a position as head basketball coach and assistant football coach at Jonesboro-Hodge High School in Jonesboro, Louisiana, where the next year he also started teaching mathematics and social studies. His ability as a coach was

⁴⁷Ibid., May 6, 1966, Bulletin 1086 (State Board of Education, 1966), 23.

⁴⁸After retiring, John S. Kyser remained in Natchitoches. He continued to be involved in educational organizations and projects and traveled extensively with his wife, Thelma. He died July 14, 1975.

⁴⁹*Who's Who in America*, 36 (1970-71), 1234; *Leaders in Education*, 5th edition (1974), 590.

recognized when his team won the State Class A basketball championship in 1950-1951.⁵⁰ Coach Kilpatrick entered higher education with an appointment as assistant professor of health and physical education at Northeast Louisiana College in 1951. He taught mathematics and education and served as athletic director and basketball coach at the Monroe institution until 1957. Again he won an outstanding coaching honor in 1955 when he was named Coach of the Year by the Louisiana Sports Writers Association. Despite his busy coaching and teaching schedule, Kilpatrick entered graduate school at Louisiana State University where he earned a M.Ed. degree in 1953. Within a few years he left active coaching and concentrated solely on teaching education and psychology at NLC. In 1965 he received the Ed.D. degree from LSU and was named chairman of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education at NLC, a position he held for one year until his appointment as Dean of the College at NSC in February 1966.⁵¹ When President Kyser took leave he was named acting president, effective August 15, 1966, and then president on July 1, 1967.

In addition to his coaching awards, Arnold Kilpatrick served as vice-president and president of both the Gulf States Conference and the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics. At various times he was a member of the executive committees of the United States Olympic Committee and the United States Amateur Athletic Union. He also represented Louisiana in the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and served as chairman of the President's Council of Louisiana Colleges and Universities. In both Monroe and Natchitoches Dr. Kilpatrick was active in civic and church affairs. He was named Young Man of the Year in 1954 by the Monroe-West Monroe Junior Chamber of Commerce.⁵²

When Arnold Kilpatrick became the thirteenth president of Northwestern State College, he rejected the idea of a formal installation. He felt that a president should be honored for his achievements when he left office rather than at the beginning of his tenure when no one knew if he would be a good administrator or not.⁵³ Recognizing the fine work of the college throughout the years, the new president, upon taking office, promised "to do my utmost to carry on and uphold the traditions of Northwestern State College in trying to provide the best educational opportunities possible for the young men and women of this state and nation." "To be associated with this fine old institution is a rare privilege," he declared.⁵⁴

During the Kilpatrick years, NSC not only maintained its cherished traditions but also ventured into the modern world of multifaceted institutions of higher learning with new programs designed to meet the immediate needs of the people

⁵⁰"Dr. Arnold R. Kilpatrick, President Northwestern State University of Louisiana, Biographical Sketch," Division of Informational Services, Northwestern State University, n.d. Cited hereafter as "Kilpatrick Sketch;" *Who's Who in America*, 36 (1970-71), 1234.

⁵¹"Kilpatrick Sketch."

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Dr. Arnold R. Kilpatrick, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 17, 1984.

⁵⁴*The Natchitoches Times*, August 15, 1966; *Alumni Columns*, XXVI (September 1966), 1.

it served and the state of Louisiana in general. Less than two months after becoming acting president, in October 1966, Dr. Kilpatrick asked the State Board of Education to approve the establishment of associate degree programs in occupational areas at NSC. At the time the college only had one two-year terminal program in secretarial administration. The 1966 proposal included new associate degrees in merchandising, electronics, drafting, printing, tool and die design, and woodworking. Noting that "the need for trained technicians as well as professionals is critical for Louisiana's full industrial development" and that "post-high school education can no longer be considered a privilege for the few," the NSC proposal cited a publication of the American Council on Education which stated that 403 four-year colleges and universities were already offering occupational curricula on a subbaccalaureate level by 1959. On October 27, 1966, the State Board approved the new programs with only one dissenting vote.⁵⁵

A few months later, President Kilpatrick again appeared before the State Board of Education requesting approval of another degree program. To serve the needs of superintendents, supervisors, and teachers in north Louisiana, the college proposed a Specialist in Education degree which included thirty hours of graduate work beyond the master's degree. The board approved the new graduate degree program on December 9, 1966, and Northwestern became the first state college in Louisiana to offer the Specialist in Education degree.⁵⁶

The Specialist in Education degree brought additional school personnel back to NSC. Many returning educators began to think of going beyond the thirty hours of the specialist degree to doctoral work. The demand for doctoral level studies grew and in December 1967 the State Board of Education authorized NSC to grant an Ed.D. or Ph.D. in education.⁵⁷ The college proposed a number of Ph.D. and Ed.D. programs but ultimately only four doctoral degrees were approved — the Doctor of Education in elementary education, secondary education, and health and physical education and the Doctor of Philosophy in health and physical education.⁵⁸ The new doctoral programs were offered for the first time in the fall of 1968⁵⁹ and two years later, in the summer of 1970, the first two Ed.D. degrees were awarded in secondary education.⁶⁰ The nationally recognized reputation for excellence of NSC's graduate program was the result of President Kyser's original work and also of President Kilpatrick's strong support during his administration. He was personally responsible for obtaining the specialist and doctoral degrees and consistently supported the graduate programs to ensure their accreditation.⁶¹ The

⁵⁵Official Proceedings of State Board of Education, October 27, 1966, Bulletin 1079 (State Board of Education, 1966), 8, 183-91.

⁵⁶Ibid., December 9, 1966, Bulletin 1083 (State Board of Education, 1966), 8.

⁵⁷Ibid., December 15, 1967, Bulletin 1116 (State Board of Education, 1968), 12.

⁵⁸"Southern Association Report," 1975, 321; Dean Leo T. Allbritten, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 16, 1984.

⁵⁹Alumni Columns, XXVII (January 1968), 1.

⁶⁰Ibid., XXX (September 1970), 2.

⁶¹Dean Leo T. Allbritten, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 16, 1984.



academic excellence of the Graduate School also resulted from the dedicated work and untiring leadership of Dr. Allbritten who served as dean until his retirement in 1975.

One year after the introduction of doctoral degrees at NSC, the institution achieved university status. In the summer of 1970 Representative Jimmy Long and Senators Sylvan Friedman and Cecil Blair introduced a bill into the state legislature to change the name of Northwestern State College to Northwestern State University of Louisiana. On June 18, 1970, Governor John McKeithen approved Act 31 giving the eighty-six-year-old institution university status.⁶² Other state colleges also received university designation, but the first bill Governor McKeithen signed was the one pertaining to Northwestern.⁶³ At the time President Kilpatrick felt the institution's new name should be the University of Louisiana because in its early years the school had served the entire state as a teachers' college and not simply the northwestern region. There had been no regional connotation to the college's name until 1944 when it became Northwestern State College. President Kilpatrick had new stationery printed with a small "Northwestern State" and a large "University of Louisiana" hoping that only the last three words would constitute the new name.⁶⁴ Although his arguments were well-founded, *Northwestern* remained in the name of the new university. The six schools — Edu-

⁶²State of Louisiana, *Acts of The Legislature*, Regular Session, 1970, I, 130.

⁶³Dr. Arnold R. Kilpatrick, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 17, 1984.

⁶⁴Ibid.

cation, Business, Nursing, Liberal Arts, Science and Technology, and Graduate — became colleges within the university. In 1970 the College of Basic Studies for all first-year students was added to the university structure and thus the newly-designated university had six undergraduate colleges and one of the largest graduate schools in the state.⁶⁵

As NSC expanded its academic offerings and moved toward university status, it experienced several administrative reorganizations. When Dr. Kilpatrick became acting president in August 1966, his administration consisted of a Dean of Administration, Charles F. Thomas who had replaced Sylvan W. Nelken in that position on July 1, and the academic deans of the five schools — Thomas P. Southerland in Education, David C. Townsend in Applied Arts and Sciences, George A. Stokes in Arts and Sciences, Etta Anne Hincker in Nursing, and Leo T. Allbritten in the Graduate School. Within the schools were eighteen academic departments. Student affairs were the responsibility of Dudley Fulton, Dean of Students. Upon becoming president in 1967, Dr. Kilpatrick named Dr. Thomas as Dean of the College; Dr. Stokes as Dean of Academic Affairs; and Dr. René J. Bienvenu, Dean of Arts and Sciences. At the same time the academic departments were increased from eighteen to twenty-eight by splitting up large departmental units such as education, social sciences, physical sciences, and biological sciences into smaller academic departments and by the creation of some totally new departments. The increase in departments followed the recommendation of the Southern Association. The School of Applied Arts and Sciences became the School of Business.⁶⁶ The next year, 1968, Dr. Thomas became vice-president of academic affairs and the School of Arts and Sciences was divided into the School of Liberal Arts and the School of Science and Technology.⁶⁷ In July 1972, reorganization continued with the establishment of three additional vice presidencies — a vice-president of student affairs, of financial and administrative affairs, and of research, planning and federal programs. Richard H. Galloway, E. Loneta Graves, and Frank W. Martin, respectively, were appointed to the new positions.⁶⁸

While NSU was undergoing internal reorganization, the entire governance of Louisiana's higher education was experiencing a similar process. In 1968 the legis-

⁶⁵*Alumni Columns*, XXX (September 1970), 1.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, XXVI (September 1966), 1. Dr. Southerland had been appointed Dean of Education in October 1965 following the sudden death of Dr. Guy W. Nesom. Nesom had been dean a little over a year having replaced Dr. John A. Jones upon his retirement in 1964. Dr. Stokes was appointed Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences in 1963 upon the retirement of Dean Clarence E. Dugdale. Dr. Townsend was also appointed Dean of the School of Applied Arts and Sciences and Miss Hincker acting Dean of Nursing in 1963. *Alumni Columns*, XXIII (September 1963), 3; *ibid.*, XXIII (May 1964), 4; *ibid.*, XXVII (September 1967), 1; *ibid.*, XXVII (October 1967), 2; *ibid.*, XXV (September 1965), 1; *Official Proceedings of State Board of Education*, October 15, 1965, Bulletin 1052 (State Board of Education, 1965), 209-14.

⁶⁷*Alumni Columns*, XXVIII (September 1968), 1.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, XXXII (Fall, 1972), 1. Dr. Richard H. Galloway, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, November 12, 1984.

lature approved and the voters subsequently ratified a constitutional amendment creating the Louisiana Coordinating Council for Higher Education. Implemented April 3, 1969, the statewide coordinating board's purpose was to "prevent 'unnecessary duplicating' in higher education." The State Board of Education and the Louisiana State Board of Supervisors maintained their governing functions but the Coordinating Council had to approve any new degree program. The Council was also empowered to examine the feasibility of establishing new institutions, develop a master plan for higher education, compile information on public higher education, and exercise limited budgetary responsibilities.⁶⁹ In 1974 the two governing boards and the Coordinating Council were replaced by three management boards — the Board of Supervisors of Louisiana State University, the Board of Supervisors of Southern University, and the Board of Trustees for State Colleges and Universities — and one coordinating agency, the Board of Regents. The new governing structure was established by Article VIII of the 1974 Constitution and implemented by Act 313 of the 1975 Louisiana legislature.⁷⁰ Under the new system NSU's immediate management board was the Board of Trustees for State Colleges and Universities with the Board of Regents exercising planning and coordinating responsibilities. The introduction, deletion, or modification of programs, changes in administrative units, budgetary requests and other university proposals had to have the approval of both the State Board of Trustees and the Board of Regents.⁷¹ As Dr. Kilpatrick noted, a president had to spend much of his time representing his university before both boards, the governor, Division of Administration, and appropriate legislative committees. He felt that his role as spokesman for NSU before various governmental agencies was one of his primary duties as president.⁷²

During the Kilpatrick years, NSU began expanding its services to areas surrounding the university through an "outreach" program. Education centers were opened at Fort Polk and England Air Force Base and the university's Shreveport campus was expanded. Off-campus classes, through the Division of Continuing Education, were offered in a number of locations such as Alexandria, Jena, Winnfield, Mansfield and Marksfield.⁷³ The university's off-campus offerings were so well received in the Fort Polk-Leesville area that in 1974 Fort Polk donated a 160-acre tract of land to NSU for the development of a campus on the base.⁷⁴ In June 1976 the first building, a classroom-administration building, on the Fort Polk campus was opened. In dedicatory ceremonies, President Kilpatrick declared that the traditional university campus "is no longer capable of meeting the unique chal-

⁶⁹"The Master Plan For Higher Education in Louisiana," *Louisiana Register*, 4 supplement (April 20, 1978), 136.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*

⁷¹*Ibid.*, 136-37.

⁷²Dr. Arnold R. Kilpatrick, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 17, 1984.

⁷³*Alumni Columns*, XXXI (January 1972), 2.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, XXXII (Spring, 1974), 1.



Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library

A New Era

lenges of today” and that “educators at Northwestern respond to the challenge to go where the people are. . . .”⁷⁵

Although NSU was expanding its educational services to the people of Louisiana, the College of Nursing was finding it increasingly difficult to coordinate its several campuses throughout the state. Faculty recruitment, curriculum revision, and maintenance of clinical facilities became problems on several campuses. In 1954 the Monroe campus was closed and five years later the Alexandria campus was terminated.⁷⁶ The consolidation of clinical facilities led to better nursing programs as evidenced by the baccalaureate degree obtaining National League for Nursing accreditation in 1959. When Confederate Memorial Medical Center (previously Shreveport Charity Hospital) terminated its contract with NSC and opened its own diploma facility in 1962 the continuance of NSC’s nursing program seemed to be in jeopardy. In reality the loss of CMMC facilities turned out to be beneficial since the college built its own facility, which opened in the spring of 1967, at 1800 Warrington Place in Shreveport.⁷⁷ Geographic consolidation continued with the closing of the Baton Rouge and Pineville campuses in 1970 and the resultant consolidation of all clinical nursing courses on the Shreveport campus.⁷⁸ In 1972 the College of Nursing expanded its offerings with the initiation of an associate degree program and a master’s program. All three programs were located in Shreveport, two at the Warrington Place campus and the associate program a few miles away on King’s Highway. In 1973, Peggy Ledbetter, Dean of the College of Nursing, moved her office to Shreveport and the consolidation was complete.⁷⁹ In nursing, consolidation of programs and facilities rather than expansion throughout the state enhanced the already existing excellence of NSU’s College of Nursing.

Other unique activities on the Natchitoches campus in the 1970s gained NSU recognition in scholarly circles and among the general public. The Southern Studies Institute was established during the Kilpatrick years as a successor to the old Louisiana Studies Institute. The SSI was founded to encourage original research and publication of studies focusing on southern history and literature. Its quarterly publication, *Southern Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal of the South*, under its director, John M. Price, and advised by an editorial board of internationally recognized experts, has published scholarly articles of high quality from writers throughout the nation.⁸⁰ The Folklife Center, the original idea of Dr. Donald Hatley professor of English, began arousing interest in folklife studies, soon

⁷⁵Ibid., XXXV (Summer, 1976), 2.

⁷⁶Phyllis Graves, “College of Nursing: Northwestern State University, 1949-1979,” (graduate paper, University of Alabama in Birmingham, 1979), 6-7.

⁷⁷Ibid., 6, 9-10.

⁷⁸Ibid., 13.

⁷⁹Ibid., 13-14. The deans of the College of Nursing were Hilda Burnham (1952-1962); Etta Anne Hincker, 1962-1968; Frances Pingrey (acting dean, 1968); Peggy Ledbetter (1968-).

⁸⁰*Northwestern State University of Louisiana General Catalogue 1979-1980*, 31-32; John M. Price, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, November 12, 1984.

Northwestern State University



NSU — Fort Polk Campus



NSU College of Nursing — Shreveport Campus

A New Era

leading to the establishment of a folklife festival on campus that has been a major yearly attraction for the university and community.⁸¹ In both cases, President Kilpatrick supported another person's idea to the benefit of NSU.

To many, the most striking accomplishment of the Kilpatrick administration was the continued expansion of the university's physical facilities. Dr. Kilpatrick was instrumental in obtaining some \$25 million for physical expansion, adding the Teacher Education Center (1969), Post Office (1969), Biological Sciences Building (1970), Health and Physical Education Majors Building (1970), President's Home (1971), Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library (1972), new Athletic Complex (1977-78), and the Recreation Complex (1977-78).⁸² Two of the buildings, TEC and Watson Memorial Library, were recognized for their design and functional usability.⁸³ Other structures, such as Rapides Hall, Sabine Hall, Iberville Dining Hall, and the Student Union were actually built by President Kyser but completed and occupied during Dr. Kilpatrick's first semester as acting president. The ground was broken for the new arts and sciences building, the largest classroom building in the state at that time, several days before President Kyser left office. He had accumulated funding over the years for the building and by breaking ground when he was still president, the building's plaque bore his name.⁸⁴

Some of the university's older buildings such as Agnes Morris, Audubon, Carondelet, and Kate Chopin, all women's dormitories, and A, B, C, and D frame structures were razed while others such as Caldwell, Fournet, and Williamson halls were renovated.⁸⁵ Unfortunately, one of the original buildings on the old quadrangle, Guardia Hall, burned in 1967. The loss of the building was disastrous but so was the destruction of the Williamson Museum and the Louisiana Studies Institute's photographic collection which it housed.⁸⁶ Even though architectural plans for two new dormitories and a dining hall had been drawn up, President Kilpatrick, despite criticism from some quarters, stopped construction when projections indicated a leveling off of enrollment. Had these structures been built they would have been unoccupied and would have added significantly to the bonded indebtedness of the university.⁸⁷ Dr. Kilpatrick was also criticized by some faculty members for building a president's home with money they felt could be better spent on faculty raises or some other worthwhile project. In reality the President's Home was built with revenues from oil and gas deposits on the Nicholls State University campus. The funds were dedicated to the construction of presidents' homes on state university campuses and could be used for no other purpose. If NSU had rejected the funds, they would have gone to Louisiana Tech which was next in line

⁸¹Dr. Arnold R. Kilpatrick, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 17, 1984.

⁸²"Southern Association Report," 1975; Dr. Arnold R. Kilpatrick, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 17, 1984.

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶*Alumni Columns*, XXVI (February 1967), 1.

⁸⁷Dr. Arnold R. Kilpatrick, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 17, 1984.



Student Union Christmas Decorations

for a new president's home.⁸⁸ Throughout the twenty-four years of the administrations of Presidents Kyser and Kilpatrick, the modern NSU campus was developed.

In July 1977 President Kilpatrick announced his retirement effective January 31, 1978.⁸⁹ The State Board of Trustees began a search for a successor while friends of the retiring president made plans to honor him and his wife, Juanita, at a testimonial dinner. On January 17, 1978, nearly four hundred alumni, students, elected officials headed by Governor John McKeithen, and other friends of the Kilpatricks attended the dinner and presented the retiring president with appropriate gifts.⁹⁰ President Kilpatrick had presided over the university during one of its periods of rapid expansion. The modern campus had been nearly completed, off-campus facilities built or expanded, new associate and graduate degrees added, and a new name conferred on the old normal school. *The Natchitoches Times* editorialized upon his retirement, "Kilpatrick has served the university during perhaps the most difficult period for higher education in Louisiana and the nation, and his dedicated efforts should be appreciated by alumni, students, and friends of Northwestern."⁹¹

The newspaper's allusion to "the most difficult period for higher education in Louisiana and the nation" referred, among other things, to the student protest movement that swept the United States in the 1960s and 1970s. The placid decade of the 1950s turned into the turbulent era of student involvement in social justice

⁸⁸Ibid.

⁸⁹*The Natchitoches Times*, July 31, 1977.

⁹⁰Ibid., January 8, 1978, January 19, 1978.

⁹¹Ibid., August 4, 1977.

activism. Although there was a Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) group on campus who threatened to bomb or seize buildings, there was no serious trouble at the university.⁹² The same was true of integration — there were no serious racial incidents on campus.⁹³ Yet there was a noticeable lessening of rules governing student life from the 1950s, through the 1960s, to the 1970s. Northwestern, along with colleges and universities throughout the nation, retreated from its *in loco parentis* role in supervising student social life.⁹⁴ The adoption in 1971 of the twenty-sixth amendment giving eighteen-year-olds the right to vote further eroded the university's authority to regulate student life.⁹⁵ It was, perhaps, student life which changed most strikingly during the Kyser-Kilpatrick years.

The most notable change was in the number of students enrolling at Northwestern. The enrollment increased from 1,688 to 5,203 during President Kyser's administration.⁹⁶ By 1968 it reached an all-time high of 6,555⁹⁷ and then began dropping. College authorities explained that the decline in undergraduate students was caused by a decrease in college-age population, the end of the military draft, and inflation — all factors which affected college enrollment throughout the United States. Additionally, Northwestern's enrollment was affected adversely by the granting of four-year status to the LSU branch in Shreveport. Traditionally, Caddo Parish had provided about 25 percent of the college's students.⁹⁸ The branches of LSU at Shreveport and Alexandria in particular led to a decrease of resident students on Northwestern's campus.

During the Kyser years, student life was still closely supervised by college authorities. Every woman student at NSC was a member of AWS (Associated Women Students) and was subject to regulations formulated and administered by the Judiciary Board of AWS and the college's administration. With the admonition, "Always remember, whether on the Campus or away, YOU are Northwestern and Northwestern wants to be proud of YOU," the *Student Handbook* detailed the regulations for women.⁹⁹ A student had to "sign out" when leaving campus, spending the night in another residence hall or the infirmary, attending a picnic, party, dance, outing or trip out of town, and going to any part of the cam-

⁹²Dr. Arnold R. Kilpatrick, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 17, 1984.

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴For an excellent analysis of American education in the modern period see Diane Ravitch, *The Troubled Crusade: American Education, 1945-1980* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1983).

⁹⁵Dr. Richard H. Galloway, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, November 12, 1984.

⁹⁶*Alumni Columns*, XXXV (Fall, 1975), 4.

⁹⁷Ibid., XXVIII (October 1968), 2. The figure used is for the fall semester. In the 1970s the enrollment began increasing again. NSU's preliminary fall semester enrollment for 1975 was 6,598 with the predictions that it would reach seven thousand for the first time when the final figures were compiled. These figures, however, included many students registered in off-campus classes. Ibid., XXXV (Fall, 1975), 7.

⁹⁸"Southern Association Report," 1975, 37.

⁹⁹*Student Handbook*, 1958. *Northwestern State College Bulletin*, XLVII (August 1958), 50-62.

pus not a part of her daily routine. When she returned to her dorm she had to "sign in." Women were allowed evening date nights according to their classification. Every student could have an evening date (an engagement extending after 8:00) on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights. Sophomores were allowed one additional evening date a week, juniors two, seniors three, and graduate students every night of the week. Students on the honor roll, except first-semester freshmen, were allowed an additional evening date each week. Women were also permitted to attend church services one night a week, participate in college-approved activities, and to go to the library. The library became extremely popular not only for academic purposes but as a place where female and male students could meet within the rules of the college.¹⁰⁰ Juniors and seniors were also allowed a twenty-five minute break between 8:00 and 10:00 p.m. on week nights. Women residence halls closed at 10:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 11:00 p.m. on Fridays and Sundays and 12:00 midnight on Saturdays. Fifteen minutes after closing hour there was a house check and fifteen minutes later all lights had to be out. There was no visiting after "lights out" although a student could keep her lights on to study but this was not encouraged.¹⁰¹ Quiet hours were to be observed in women dormitories in the afternoon from 1:00 to 3:00 and "absolute quiet" from 8:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. Monday through Friday. Telephone calls were strictly limited to five minutes to give everyone an equal opportunity to use the telephones which were located in the halls of the dorms. After "lights out" no student could make or receive a call.¹⁰²

Each student was responsible for the cleanliness of her room. The *Student Handbook* warned "Rooms should be kept in order at all times — beds carefully made, floors clean, waste baskets and ash trays emptied, desk and dresser tops neat, mirrors clean, clothes properly cared for, room well-ventilated and orderly in appearance."¹⁰³ Every day the house director inspected the students' rooms at 10:00 a.m. No cooking was permitted in residence hall although snacks could be prepared in the dorm kitchens. No ill student could remain in her room; she had to go to the infirmary. In the mid-Kyser years room rates for women residence halls ranged from thirty-two dollars to fifty-four dollars a semester.¹⁰⁴

College regulations even followed women students outside of the dorms. To eat in the dining halls, a woman student had to be fully dressed and no slacks or jeans were allowed there. Rolled-up hair was considered inappropriate for work and class and for other activities, such as decorating, it had to be completely covered.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., 50-52; Barbara F. Gillis, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 8, 1984.

¹⁰¹*Student Handbook*, 1958, 52, 55.

¹⁰²Ibid., 55-56; Barbara F. Gillis, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 8, 1984.

¹⁰³*Student Handbook*, 1958, 57.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., 57, 58; Barbara F. Gillis, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 8, 1984; *Catalogue*, 1957-58. *Northwestern State College Bulletin*, XLVII (February 1958), 28-29.

Shorts were not allowed except for Bermuda shorts in physical education classes and at special activities; girls were permitted to sun-bathe in "No-Man's Land," a designated area between Varnado Hall and the freshman dorms.¹⁰⁵ "Public display of affection" and "use of improper language" were considered "inappropriate conduct."¹⁰⁶

Violation of college regulations by women students resulted in "minor" penalties, "restrictions," and "major" penalties. A "minor" was given for infraction of a less important regulation such as failing to "sign in" or "out," returning one or two minutes after closing hour, visiting after "lights out," making a telephone call lasting more than five minutes, and having an untidy room. No penalty was attached to a "minor" but three minors during a semester resulted in a one-night "restriction."¹⁰⁷ A "restriction" penalty resulted from an accumulation of three minors or violation of an important regulation such as talking from a residence hall window, wearing short shorts or swimsuits outside of dorms, using improper language, and signing someone else "in" or "out." A "restriction" could last one or more nights and meant a student had to remain in her room from 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. each night she was restricted, could not make or receive telephone calls, except long distance ones, and could not entertain visitors in her room.¹⁰⁸ A "major" penalty was given for violation of a very important regulation and resulted in "campus," "strict campus" or a "recommendation of disciplinary probation." A "campused" student could not leave the campus at any time, had to be in her dorm by 6:00 p.m. every evening and could not receive telephone calls after 6:00 p.m. except emergency ones. A "strict campus" required that a student remain in her room day and night except to attend class, Sunday morning church services, and meals. She could not make or receive telephone calls and could not have visitors in her room. Each time she left her dorm she had to "sign in" and "out." A student who received a "disciplinary probation" penalty had to be in her dorm by 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday but she could have evening dates on Saturday and Sunday and could go home on week-ends; she could not have a car on campus. "Majors" were given for offenses such as spending the night in town without permission, bringing intoxicating liquors into a dorm or giving the appearance of excessive drinking, excessive display of affection, and being more than fifteen minutes late in returning to the dorm.¹⁰⁹ At this time the college was acting *in loco parentis* and felt a serious responsibility to protect the well-being of its women students.

Obviously since the regulation of women students' life had to have a restrictive effect on men's activities, the *Student Handbook* listed very few residence hall

¹⁰⁵*Student Handbook*, 1958, 58-59; Barbara F. Gillis, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 8, 1984.

¹⁰⁶*Student Handbook*, 1958, 58.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., 60.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., 60-61.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., 61-62.

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regulations for men. They were to observe study hours from 8:00 to 10:00 p.m. every night except Saturdays and Sundays and strict quiet during study and sleep hours. Their rooms were also to be kept sanitary and no firearms or explosives were permitted in the dorms. Men could not have intoxicating liquors in dorms or on campus; however, they did not have to sign "out" except when leaving town. Room rates for men ranged from thirty-two dollars to fifty-four dollars a semester in the mid-Kyser years.¹¹⁰

During the Kilpatrick years most of the regulations on student life were gradually eliminated. Women students were no longer required to return to their dorms by a specific time; however, they still had to "sign out" but only so the college authorities could locate them in case of an emergency. Co-educational dorms were introduced to the campus, and, according to President Kilpatrick, there were fewer problems in them than in the regular dorms.¹¹¹ Fewer students remained on campus on weekends beginning in the fall of 1969 when Saturday classes were eliminated by extending Tuesday and Thursday classes to one hour and fifteen minutes instead of the traditional fifty minutes.¹¹² The same year, day-long food service was offered to the students.¹¹³ To the delight of NSU students, the university calendar was revised in 1972 to complete the first semester before the Christmas holiday instead of mid-January.¹¹⁴ Many of the liberal changes were introduced by the university authorities during the Kilpatrick years before the students actually demanded them.¹¹⁵ The willingness to recognize changing life styles among students and modify university regulations accordingly explains, perhaps, the lack of serious student protest at NSU during the 1970s.

Northwestern students enjoyed many organizations and activities during the Kyser-Kilpatrick years. For those interested, there were social sororities and fraternities and more than thirty departmental organizations in 1958. In addition, there were several musical groups including the band, chorus, college singers, Demonaires, and orchestra. The Purple Jackets and Blue Key continued their services to the college community while religious organizations served the spiritual needs of NSC students.¹¹⁶ By 1974 the number of organizations available to students rose to ninety.¹¹⁷

Northwestern was rich in traditions and customs. Many of these involved incoming freshmen. Freshmen boys (dogs) had their hair "removed" during the

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"Dogs"

first three days of classes by upperclassmen who took great pride in designing unique "hair-dos" with the razor. At the freshman party held during Orientation Week there was an "Ugliest Dog" and "Prettiest Girl" contest. Freshmen boys and girls were expected to buy caps and wear them until the State Fair game. If NSC won, they discarded them; if the Demons lost they wore the caps until the Christmas holidays. All freshmen were to attend the first home football game wearing their frosh caps. To the Freshman Parade and pep rally before the game, frosh girls were to wear "pigtails in purple and white ribbon, no make-up, clothing of clashing colors, short skirts, blouse on backwards and wrong side out, mismatched shoes and GOBS of jewelry" and freshmen boys "pajamas, tie, belt and old shoes (and must be well-decorated with lipstick)." At the game, freshmen formed a pep squad with girls wearing frosh cap, white skirt and shirt or white dress with a purple tie and boys frosh cap, dark trousers, and white sport shirt.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁰Ibid., 63; *Catalogue, 1957-58*, 28-29.

¹¹¹Dr. Arnold R. Kilpatrick, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 17, 1984; *Alumni Columns*, XXI (January 1972), 2.

¹¹²Ibid., XXVII (May 1969), 1.

¹¹³Ibid., XXIX (October 1969), 2.

¹¹⁴Ibid., XXXI (February 1972), 2.

¹¹⁵Dr. Arnold R. Kilpatrick, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 17, 1984.

¹¹⁶*Student Handbook, 1958*, 37-42.

¹¹⁷*Student Handbook, 1974-1975. Northwestern State University Bulletin*, LXIII (August 1974), 16, 31-44.

¹¹⁸*Student Handbook, 1958*, 12-14.

Other Northwestern traditions involved the student body in general and faculty and staff. "Howdy Days" were two days set aside in September to recognize the friendliness of the campus. On these days everyone on campus wore name-tags and tried to call each person they met by name. "Mom and Dad Day" recognized students' parents by extending to them a special invitation to visit the campus and attend a football game. State Fair game, when Northwestern and Louisiana Tech met on the gridiron, was preceded by a week of frenzied activities including pep rallies and burning of the Tech bulldog. The State Fair queen and her court, selected by the student body, reigned over the festivities which ended with a parade in Shreveport followed by the game. A few weeks later Homecoming was celebrated with a coffee, parade through town with floats made by student organizations, luncheon, football game, and Homecoming dance. Two activities marked Christmas time. The Christmas At Home Reception displayed miniature doll scenes designed by women in each residence hall. During the reception the women students dressed in formals stood by their creations to explain them to the hundreds of appreciative visitors. The following week, students, faculty and their families, and others participated in the all-college Christmas Carol Sing under a large tree in front of Varnado Hall. There was also an Honors Day convocation to recognize outstanding students both in academics and extracurricular activities and all-college dances scheduled throughout the year.¹¹⁹ During the twenty-four-year Kyser-Kilpatrick era some traditions were lost; others changed names; some remained the same; and still others were added. "Scalping" freshmen boys, frosh caps, "Howdy Days", Christmas at Home Reception, and Christmas Carol Sing were dropped. Honors Day was replaced by the Academic Honors Banquet and "Mom and Dad Day" became Parents Day. The State Fair game and homecoming remained major university events. New activities were the election of Mr. and Miss NSC [NSU] and the Lady of the Bracelet Beauty Pageant.

Sports were also very popular on the Northwestern campus during the Kyser-Kilpatrick years. Football and basketball were the major spectator sports and the Demon teams were successful in both. In 1956 Coach Harry "Rags" Turpin, a member of the coaching staff since 1926 and head football coach since 1934, resigned his coaching position under orders from his physician. However, he remained director of athletics until July 1, 1957.¹²⁰ Meanwhile, effective February, 1957, Jack Clayton was named head football coach and later also replaced Turpin as athletic director. Coach Clayton's teams were immediately successful, becoming Gulf States Conference Co-champions in 1957 and 1958. Then in 1962, Clayton's Demons won their first undisputed GSC football championship.¹²¹ The

¹¹⁹Ibid., 14-15; Barbara F. Gillis, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 8, 1984; See Lucile M. Hendrick's account "Former Dean Highlights Her Tenure" in the *Natchitoches Times*, October 4, 1984.

¹²⁰*Alumni Columns*, XVI (November 1956), 2.

¹²¹Ibid., XVI (January 1957), 1; *ibid.*, XVII (December 1957), 2; *ibid.*, XVIII (December 1958), 2; *ibid.*, XXII (November 1962), 1.

best was still to come; in 1966, his team enjoyed its most successful season in twenty-seven years of NSC football. Undefeated through nine games and GSC champions, the Demons earned the top spot in the national ratings of the NAIA, a number four position in the Associated Press poll and a sixth spot ranking in the United Press International small college balloting. The Demons were invited to participate in NAIA and NCAA playoffs but the team voted not to accept the offers since all of their players would not be allowed to participate. NCAA regulations forbade the use of freshmen and first-year transfer players and the NAIA limited playoff squads to thirty-five. The regulations of both associations would have eliminated players who had participated in the season's games. The 1966 Demon team was the first to be undefeated since 1939.¹²² Shortly after the 1966 season, Coach Clayton resigned as head football coach but continued as athletic director for another year. During his eleven years as head coach, he won or tied for the GSC football championship four times and won the baseball title in 1967. Clayton was the GSC's Coach of the Year in football in 1958, 1962 and 1966 and in baseball in 1967.¹²³ Glenn Gossett replaced Clayton as football coach in 1967. During his years the Gulf States Conference was dissolved and NSC became an independent for several seasons.¹²⁴ When Gossett resigned in 1972 to enter private business, George Doherty was appointed to the position. NSU entered the Gulf South Conference where the Demons won the championship in 1972 with a 6-0 conference record. Three years later Doherty became athletic director and A.L. Williams was named head coach.¹²⁵

The basketball team experienced several successful seasons during the Kyser-Kilpatrick years. In 1952-1953 and 1953-1954 Coach Charles "Red" Thomas's team was co-champion of the Gulf States Conference.¹²⁶ In 1958 Coach Huey Cranford's team again won the GSC co-championship and in 1959-60 emerged as GSC champions.¹²⁷ In 1965 Tynes B. Hildebrand replaced the resigned Cranford as basketball coach and nine years later led the Demons to the Gulf South Conference championship with an 11-2 conference record. The Demons also won the conference track championship in 1974, thus gaining them the All-Sports Gulf South Conference Trophy.¹²⁸ NSU excelled in other sports, especially track and field

¹²²*Ibid.*, XXVI (November 1966), 4. President Kilpatrick believed the undefeated football team affected the large increase in enrollment the next year. Dr. Arnold R. Kilpatrick, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 17, 1984.

¹²³*Alumni Columns*, XXVIII (December 1968), 4.

¹²⁴*Ibid.*, XXVI (December 1966), 4; *ibid.*, XXX (May 1971), 4.

¹²⁵*Ibid.*, XXXI (April 1972), 4; *ibid.*, XXXII (Winter, 1972), 2; *ibid.*, XXXIV (Winter, 1975), 8.

¹²⁶*Ibid.*, XIV (March 1955), 3.

¹²⁷*Ibid.*, XVII (March 1958), 2; *ibid.*, XXXIII (Spring, 1974), 4.

¹²⁸*Ibid.*, XXIV (March 1965), 4; *ibid.*, XXXIII (Spring, 1974), 4; *ibid.*, XXXIII (Summer, 1974), 2.

and gymnastics. Coach Walter Ledet's track team won an unbelievable five consecutive Gulf States Conference championships from 1953 through 1957 and he was named "Coach of the Year" in recognition of coaching five straight championship teams.¹²⁹ The Demon gymnastics team under coach John Piscopo and Armando Vega was outstanding and won many meets and titles. In 1967 the Demons captured both the AAU and NAIA gymnastic championships.¹³⁰ The baseball squad, although not as successful as the other spring sports' teams, won the GSC co-championship in 1957 under coach "Cracker" Brown who became "Coach of the Year" and in 1967 won its first outright title under Coach Jack Clayton who was also named "Coach of the Year."¹³¹

NSU's emphasis on sports led to its gaining Division I (major college) status in the National Collegiate Athletic Association beginning September 1, 1976, in all sports. It had been a Division II college since joining the NCAA in 1964. To gain the major status the Demons dropped out of the Division II Gulf South Conference in the summer of 1976 and maintained an independent status until it could join another conference.¹³²

NSU was known in the sports world not only for its athletic teams, but also for the location in Prather Coliseum of the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame was established at NSU in 1972 with the induction of forty-one of Louisiana's greatest athletes and coaches. A project of the Louisiana Sports Writers Association, each year additional outstanding athletes are named to the Hall of Fame and appropriately enshrined.¹³³ The university has benefited from having such a prestigious display of athletic history housed on its campus.

In commenting on the establishment of the Graduate School in 1954, President Kyser remarked, "This marks a new era for our college. . . ."¹³⁴ It was the first year of his administration and already exciting things were happening at Northwestern and they would continue to happen during his twelve years and the twelve-year administration of his successor, Arnold R. Kilpatrick. While clinging to its hallowed traditions, the Northwestern of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s became a modern university dedicated to "a new era" of teaching, research, and service.

¹²⁹Ibid., XVII (September 1957), 2-3.

¹³⁰Ibid., XV (March 1956), 2; *ibid.*, XVII (September 1957), 2-3; *ibid.*, XIX (April 1960), 1; *ibid.*, XXVI (April 1967), 4; *ibid.*, XXIX (April 1970), 4.

¹³¹Ibid., XVII (September 1957), 2-3; *ibid.*, XXVI (April 1967), 4.

¹³²Ibid., XXXV (Spring, 1976), 7.

¹³³Ibid., XXXI (February 1972), 4.

¹³⁴Ibid., XIV (December 1954), 1.

"Foundation for a Second Century"

When President Kilpatrick retired in January 1978 there were thirteen aspirants who hoped to replace him at the helm of the university even though it was evident that NSU, along with other American colleges and universities, was emerging from its halcyon period of growth. Future NSU presidents would have to deal with dropping instead of rising enrollments, unoccupied in place of overcrowded buildings, weakened academic standards that infiltrated higher education during the troubled decades of the 1960s and 1970s, inadequate financing and rising costs of education, increasing competition from neighboring institutions for the shrinking number of students, and demoralization of the faculty caused by small or no raises, increased teaching loads, and academically unprepared students.¹ On February 1, 1978, Dr. René J. Bienvenu, Jr. assumed the presidency of NSU and during his four-year administration became widely known for his emphasis on academic excellence. On June 1, 1982, Dr. Joseph J. Orze succeeded President Bienvenu. He, too, stressed "excellence with integrity." Even though their goals were the same, the two presidents differed significantly in background and methods of reaching academic excellence.

René Joseph Bienvenu, Jr. was born March 19, 1923, in Colfax, Louisiana, to René Joseph and Corinne (Wells) Bienvenu.² He attended Colfax Elementary School and graduated in 1939 from Colfax High School. Immediately entering Louisiana State University with academic and band scholarships, René majored in zoology and chemistry. He did not receive his bachelor's degree until 1944 because illness forced him to drop out one year. After graduation, he served in the United States Navy and saw limited action during World War II before entering officer training school. While in the navy, he studied at the University of Pennsylvania and Cornell University. When the conflict ended René returned to LSU to begin graduate work in bacteriology; one year later, however, he left the university to go to work because he was planning to marry another graduate student, Catherine Nelken of Natchitoches. In 1948 he resumed his graduate studies at LSU and the following year received a master's degree in bacteriology.³ For over a year he worked in the lab at old Charity Hospital in Shreveport for one hundred fifty dollars a month. Then he was offered a position as bacteriologist in NSU's School of Nursing which he immediately accepted in 1950. Ten years later he became head

¹For an analysis of some of these educational problems on a national level see Diane Ravitch, *The Troubled Decade: American Education, 1945-1980* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).

²*Who's Who in America, 1980-1981*, vol. 1, 292.

³*Ibid.*, *American Men and Women of Science, The Physical and Biological Sciences*, I (A-C), 482; *The Natchitoches Times*, March 12, 1978.

of the college's department of microbiology after receiving the Ph.D. degree from the University of Texas in 1957. In 1967 he was named dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and one year later dean of the newly-formed College of Science and Technology — a position which he held until he left NSU briefly in 1977 to become assistant dean of the School of Allied Health at the LSU Medical center in Shreveport. Dr. Bienvenu resigned from the LSU position to accept the presidency of NSU in September 1977.⁴ In addition to completing his doctoral work at the University of Texas, he also studied at the Oak Ridge Institute for Nuclear Studies and became nationally known for his research and writing, especially on brucellosis.⁵

One of thirteen candidates, René Bienvenu was selected president of Northwestern State University on September 15, 1977, by the Board of Trustees for State Colleges and Universities.⁶ By the time he officially assumed his duties on February 1, 1978, Dr. Bienvenu had announced his primary goal for the university — “to establish Northwestern as an institution recognized for its academic excellence.”⁷ He had strong support from the community, faculty, and especially the students in his bid for the presidency. The North Louisiana press applauded his selection in editorials. Describing him as a person with a “rich academic background, administrative experience and personal qualities,” *The Natchitoches Times* declared that his appointment would do much “to enhance Northwestern’s sagging scholastic image.”⁸ *The Shreveport Times*, in an editorial, exclaimed, “Evidently scholastic credentials, not politics or personalities, decided the issue.”⁹

Dr. Bienvenu decided to have an official installation. The day’s program began with a Eucharistic Celebration at the Church of the Immaculate Conception followed by a reception in Watson Memorial Library hosted by the Department Heads’ Council. During the morning inaugural convocation, attended by visiting state dignitaries, representatives of other universities, members of the Board of Trustees and the Board of Regents as well as faculty, students, and friends of Northwestern, Enoch T. Nix, vice-president of the Board of Trustees, officially bestowed the authority of the presidency upon Dr. Bienvenu. At noon he was the guest of honor at a luncheon in Iberville Dining Hall for students, faculty, and visiting dignitaries. During the luncheon the students presented him with a swing. Earlier President Bienvenu had remarked that he liked the idea of Dr. Robert Lynn, President of Louisiana College, who had a swing placed in the yard of the president’s home so he could sit and swing with the students and discuss their prob-

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid., September 18, 1977.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

⁹*Alumni Columns*, XXXVII (Winter, 1977), 2.

lems. The students gave Dr. Bienvenu the means, a swing, to fulfill his promise to have a continuing dialogue with them. In the afternoon, Dr. and Mrs. Bienvenu entertained at an open house in the president’s home on campus.¹⁰

The main event of the March 8 ceremonies was the inaugural address that President Bienvenu delivered at the 17th annual Honors Banquet. Reaffirming his dedication to improving academics at NSU the new president stated, “Emphasis on academics is more than a catch-phrase with this administration — more than rhetoric — more than even a firm principle or ideal. It is a philosophy that is deeply ingrained in me.”¹¹ He continued, “Academics must be the very heart of any university. It must be the academic program that pumps the lifeblood to other areas of the institution.”¹² When questioned about the future enrollment of the university, Dr. Bienvenu explained that he expected it to increase but that an upturn would take time. He felt that a good academic environment would attract good students who in turn would attract more good students.¹³ In regard to the role of athletics he declared “Athletics represents an integral part of a university. It can complement academics. We have an enviable athletic facility here and we must take advantage of it. But academics is first, and athletics must be kept in its proper perspective.”¹⁴ President Bienvenu also announced that his administration would be student oriented and that he hoped to have a continuing open dialogue with the students.¹⁵

As president of Northwestern State University for four years, Dr. Bienvenu made significant administrative changes. He reorganized the top echelon of administration by eliminating two of the four vice-presidencies President Kilpatrick had established. Only the vice-presidents of Academic Affairs and Financial Affairs were retained. Dr. Thomas Paul Southerland was appointed the chief academic officer and Dr. Bennie Barron chief financial officer.¹⁶ Additionally, a number of new departments were established. Some were totally new; others resulted from a division or realignment of existing departments. Among the new departments were: mass communications, special education, educational psychology, history, and agriculture. The most notable innovation was the creation of a School of Creative and Performing Arts as a separate entity. University College became the College of Basic Studies and Academic Services. To administer satellite campuses, President Bienvenu appointed Dr. Roger W. Best the first dean and provost at the NSU-Fort Polk campus and Stanley Gallien director and coordinator of academic services at the NSU facility at England Air Force base.¹⁷ Dr. Bienvenu

¹⁰*The Natchitoches Times*, March 12, 1978.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷News Bureau Release to *Alumni Columns*, 1981.

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was especially proud when the master of science degree in microbiology received a commendation of excellence from the Board of Regents.¹⁸ He also felt that the adoption of a new general university core for all students was a significant accomplishment in raising academic standards.¹⁹



Bayou Folk Museum — Northwestern State University Foundation

The Center for the History of Louisiana Education was developed during President Bienvenu's tenure. Designed to preserve documents, photographs, books, and artifacts relating to the educational history of Louisiana, the center received legislative approval in 1977, but no funds were appropriated for it.²⁰ Dr. Robert Alost, Dean of the College of Education, was instrumental in its establishment and appointed Mrs. Fern Christensen director of the center. Mrs. Christensen with the assistance of Mrs. Carol Wells and John Price began collecting the original materials for the center housed in the TEC building.²¹ In 1979 Mrs. Maxine Southerland became director²² and the collection expanded greatly because of her total

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Dr. René J. Bienvenu, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, March 5, 1982.

²⁰*Alumni Columns*, XXXVII (Winter, 1977), 8; Dr. Thomas Paul Southerland, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 15, 1984.

²¹*Alumni Columns*, XXXVII (Winter, 1977), 8; Dr. Thomas Paul Southerland, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 15, 1984.

²²Mrs. Maxine Southerland, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 15, 1984.

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dedication to preserving the educational heritage of Louisiana. Mrs. Southerland arranged the donation of a one-room schoolhouse which, when furnished with period educational artifacts, became a landmark on NSU's campus. Unfortunately, the Center for the History of Louisiana Education was housed in Caldwell Hall which burned on October 18, 1982. Saddened but not discouraged at the loss, Mrs. Southerland immediately began collecting materials again and the public's response was tremendous. Funded from grants and other sources through the years, Mrs. Southerland plans to move the center to the old Women's Gym, one of NSU's buildings on the Register of Historic Places, when it is renovated.²³ The Center for the History of Louisiana Education has added to the academic luster of a university which was originally the old state normal school for the training of teachers.

Another academic activity which has improved the scholastic image of NSU was the establishment of a university press. With the support of President Bienvenu and especially of Vice-president Southerland who had been interested in beginning a press for years, John Price, Mrs. Carol Wells, and Ezra Adams established the NSU press in 1978. Most of its publications have been financed through donations since the university has provided only a small budget. Yet, under the directorship of John Price and a press board, it has produced books of outstanding quality on a variety of topics.²⁴ Considering it is one of only two true university presses in the state, the establishment of the NSU press was a highwater mark of scholastic achievement.

The new School of Creative and Performing Arts not only created a structure for academic programs, but, more importantly, provided cultural exposure to students and the general public, many of whom never before had the opportunity to enjoy the arts. Both President Bienvenu and Vice-president Southerland felt strongly that the School of Creative and Performing Arts would have a positive effect on the appreciation of the arts in the area.²⁵ Another cultural attraction of the university was the Bayou Folk Museum in Cloutierville which was donated to NSU by Mildred McCoy and is now open to the public. President Bienvenu also felt that the Lignite Research and Development Institute would have a profound effect on the area in the future.²⁶

NSU's physical plant experienced some changes during the Bienvenu years. The construction of the A.A. Fredericks Center for the Creative and Performing Arts was the major building project on campus. Planned under President Kilpatrick, about 60 percent of the building was completed during the Bienvenu years. The athletic and recreation complexes, also begun under Dr. Kilpatrick, were finished and other buildings, such as Nesom Natatorium, Caldwell, and Russell Hall,

²³Ibid.

²⁴Dr. Thomas Paul Southerland, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 15, 1984; John M. Price, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 15, 1984.

²⁵Dr. Thomas Paul Southerland, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 15, 1984; Dr. René J. Bienvenu, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, March 5, 1982.

²⁶Ibid.

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A.A. Fredericks Center for the Creative and Performing Arts



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were renovated. Land was acquired for a new nursing facility in Shreveport and the appearance of the grounds and physical plant in Natchitoches was improved. The utility systems of the main campus, under a five-year plan, were expanded to serve the university better. A new gate adorned the main entrance of the campus. It was similar to the archway of the older Northwestern State College. President Bienvenu felt that the main entrance should blend with the original "Normal Hill," the old president's home, and Varnado Hall. "Normal Hill" had been placed on the Register of Historic Places, its acceptance based on the extensive work of Dean George A. Stokes. Dr. Bienvenu felt that a modernistic entrance could be developed near the library to match the new west campus.²⁷

President Bienvenu's outstanding achievement both as a teacher and administrator was the good rapport he had with students. He thoroughly enjoyed working with young people and at the end of his administration he described NSU students as "fantastic, positive-thinking, and non-belligerent." He felt that the quality of the student body at Northwestern had improved tremendously because of the upgrading of scholastic standards. Not only the quality but also the quantity of students improved. That enrollment was on the upswing was due to the upgrading of scholastic standards, an active recruitment drive, the Professional Improvement Program, and Inside View, the summer orientation program for incoming freshmen. Equally important, the retention of students improved. Still, President Bienvenu's most serious problem was empty or partially filled dormitories. The revenue from dormitories was used to pay off the bonded indebtedness of the university; the buildings were not fully utilized because of the small number of resident students on campus. By the end of his administration, the systems budget was operating on the positive side of the ledger and President Bienvenu hoped that the expected location of the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts on campus would further relieve the problem of unused dorms.²⁸

On July 31, 1980, during the monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees in Baton Rouge, President Bienvenu announced his retirement effective January 31, 1981. He explained, "On January 31, I will have served for four full years as president of Northwestern, and it is my sincere feeling that most of the goals that I established upon assuming the presidency have been accomplished." He continued, "There has been substantial progress in academic and athletic programs and in university operations in general. I have been in higher education for 31 years and feel that retirement is appropriate at this time to allow me to devote more time to my family and other interests."²⁹ Dr. Bienvenu also admitted that his decision was made with "mixed emotions . . . I love the institution and the people who are a part of it . . . faculty, students, administrators, alumni, and friends of the University."³⁰ The Board of Trustees immediately appointed a search committee of its

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹NSU News Bureau Release to *Alumni Columns*, 1981.

³⁰NSU News Bureau Release, July 31, 1981.

membership to choose a new president. Actually President Bienvenu would remain in office until June 1, 1982, when his successor arrived in Natchitoches. Certainly President Bienvenu was one of the most popular presidents and was successful in raising the academic standards of the university and improving its scholastic image throughout the state.³¹

The Board of Trustees opened a nationwide search for a successor to President Bienvenu and on December 18, 1981, selected Dr. Joseph J. Orze, President of Worcester State College, from among sixty-six candidates. Joe Orze was born December 11, 1932, to John Paul and Veronica Marie (Kolcun) Orzechowski in Exeter, Pennsylvania.³² By the time Joe entered school his parents had moved to Binghamton, New York. At Binghamton North High School Joe participated in student government, took private art lessons, served as illustrator for the school's newspaper and yearbook, and produced his first piece of "sculpture" in an Ivory soap-carving contest. He played on both the school's football and baseball teams. His prowess on the football field resulted in offers of twenty football scholarships from prestigious universities. The primary reason he chose to attend Syracuse University was its outstanding art school; its highly successful football team was a secondary reason. His athletic successes continued at Syracuse where he was center and linebacker on the football team, catcher on the baseball team, and an undefeated varsity boxer. Equally successful in the classroom, Joe Orze graduated *magna cum laude* with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 1955. He immediately entered graduate school at Syracuse with a scholarship and teaching assistantship in pursuit of a Master of Science degree which he received in 1956.³³

From 1956 to 1959 Professor Orze taught art and education at Syracuse and also worked toward a doctorate. In September 1959 he accepted a position as associate professor of art education and sculpture at State University College in New Paltz, New York, where he remained two years. In September 1961 he moved to Middle Tennessee State University at Murfreesboro as associate professor and head of the Art Department. Murfreesboro was only thirty-two miles from Nashville so Joe Orze enrolled in doctoral work at George Peabody College where in 1970 he was awarded the Ed.D. degree in Higher Education. He also pursued advanced graduate study in art history at Vanderbilt University. In August 1966 he left Middle Tennessee to accept a position as professor and chairman of the Art Department at Southern Connecticut State College in New Haven where he remained three years. Always advancing up the career ladder, Dr. Orze was

³¹Dr. Bienvenu retired from Northwestern June 1, 1982. In December 1982 he was made President Emeritus of NSU. He died January 27, 1983, at the age of fifty-nine. NSU News Bureau Release, January 27, 1983, February 25, 1983.

³²*Who's Who in America, 1980-1981*, vol. 2, 26.

³³*The Natchitoches Times*, November 14, 1982; The Investiture Program of Dr. Joseph J. Orze, in possession of author.

appointed Dean of the College of Fine and Applied Arts at Southeastern Massachusetts University where he also served as Acting Dean of the Faculty and interim treasurer. In August 1975 he assumed his first presidency of a college, Worcester State College in Worcester, Massachusetts, where he remained until June 1982 when he left to assume his duties as president of NSU.³⁴

In addition to being an experienced university administrator, Dr. Orze is a noted artist. He has exhibited drawings and sculptures in over sixty competitions and at colleges, universities, museums, and private galleries as well as in numerous one-man exhibitions. His drawings and/or sculptures are also in the permanent collections of The Massachusetts Maritime Academy, The Munson-Williams Proctor Institute of Utica, New York, and the Institute of Art of the Benedictine Fathers in Rome. Dr. Orze has contributed many articles on either the arts or collective bargaining to professional journals and has co-authored a book, *Art From Scrap*, which was first published in 1961 and is now in a revised edition. He has also chaired two educational missions to Poland sponsored by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and served as a delegate for the same organization's Educational Good Will Visit to the National Republic of China. Recently President Orze has served as president of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. Additionally, he has delivered numerous papers and participated in seminars, workshops, and institutes throughout his career.³⁵

When Dr. Orze became president of NSU he decided to have a formal investiture on November 5, 1982. The day-long ceremonies began with an ecumenical Mass at Immaculate Conception Church presided over by the Most Reverend Lawrence P. Graves, retired Bishop of the Alexandria-Shreveport Diocese. Following the church services, there was a reception hosted by the Natchitoches Parish Chamber of Commerce and the City of Natchitoches at the Lemée House. During the investiture convocation at Prather Coliseum which was attended by visiting state dignitaries, representatives of other universities, members of the State Board of Trustees and the Board of Regents as well as faculty, students, alumni, and friends of Northwestern, Wiley Sharp, President of the State Board of Trustees, officially bestowed the authority of the presidency on Dr. Orze. After the convocation, President Orze and his family were guests at a luncheon in the Student Union Ballroom during which Dr. Orze received gifts from the student body, Alumni Association, and Natchitoches Parish Chamber of Commerce. Other activities of the investiture were the President's Concert and an Alumni Art Exhibit. The next day, November 6, Governor David Treen presented Dr. Orze with a gift during the halftime activities of the NSU-Nicholls State football game.³⁶

³⁴Vita, Joseph J. Orze, President's Office, Northwestern State University.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶*The Natchitoches Times*, November 14, 1982.

The highlight of the November 5 ceremonies was President Orze's Investiture Address — "The Ecology of a University." Declaring himself a "pragmatic idealist," he summed up his personal goal for Northwestern in two words: excellence and integrity. "We should strive for excellence in all that we do or are a part of. Whether in academics, athletics, research, cultural activities or community services, the University must strive for excellence; to be the best that it is capable of being, and, in so doing, be better than its competitors." Continuing, he declared, "We must not only strive for excellence; we must achieve it with integrity. The process of achievement must be one that we can take pride in." He noted that dedicated, effective teaching must be the primary mission of the university but he also recognized research and creative activity and community service as important functions of NSU. In regard to athletics, Dr. Orze declared, "Athletics are a vital part of Northwestern State University. Excellence in athletics is not only a viable goal for the University, it is a necessary one that must complement excellence in academics as well as in all aspects of the University's being."³⁷

In striving for academic excellence, President Orze instituted two major projects at NSU — reorganization and a zero-based audit. Under his reorganization, effective July 1, 1983, the basic structure of the university consisted of a President (Joseph J. Orze), an Executive Vice-President and Vice-President of Academic Affairs (Thomas Paul Southerland), a Vice-President of University Affairs (George A. Stokes), a Vice-President of Fiscal Affairs (Ernest J. Triche, Jr.) and seven deans of: College of Arts and Sciences (Edward W. Graham), College of Basic Studies and Associate Programs (Richard H. Galloway/Bennie G. Barron), College of Business and Applied Sciences (David C. Townsend/Barry A. Smiley), College of Education and Behavioral Sciences (Robert A. Alost/Frederick J. Gies), NSU Center at Fort Polk (Roger W. Best), Graduate School (Donald M. Rawson/Mildred Hart Bailey), College of Nursing (Peggy Jean Ledbetter). A Dean of Students and Chief Student Affairs Officer (Frederick C. Bosarge) and an Assistant to the President for External Affairs and Director of Information Services (Jerry D. Pierce) were named.³⁸ The major changes at the top level of administration divided the duties of the former vice-president of university affairs between the vice-presidents of university affairs and fiscal affairs and combined the old colleges of Liberal Arts and Science and Technology into the College of Arts and Sciences. On the next level of administration thirty-one academic departments were condensed into twenty-one.³⁹ The reorganized departments, many of

³⁷ Joseph J. Orze, investiture address, "The Ecology of a University," in possession of author.

³⁸ Northwestern State University of Louisiana, *General Catalog, 1984-85*, 323. Cited hereafter as *General Catalog, 1984-85*.

³⁹ Dr. Thomas Paul Southerland, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 15, 1984.

which were of a multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary nature, were Art; Biology and Microbiology; Chemistry, Physics and Geology; History, Social Sciences and Social Work; Language Arts; Mathematics; Military Science; Music; and Theatre and Media Arts in the College of Arts and Sciences; Agriculture and Animal Sciences; Accounting and Computer Information Systems; Business; Home Economics; and Industrial Education and Technology in the College of Business and Applied Sciences; Education; Health, Physical Education and Recreation; Psychology; and Human Services in the College of Education; Associate Degree Program; Baccalaureate Program; and Graduate Studies and Research in the College of Nursing.⁴⁰

The academic reorganization, as Dr. Orze himself admitted, was opposed by many faculty members whose departments were abolished, combined, or otherwise modified.⁴¹ Realizing that restructuring a university is never "an applauded" job, President Orze still feels the results of the reorganization have been "quite satisfactory."⁴² Along with the reorganization, the zero-based audit directed departments and other units of the university to examine their programs, courses, and activities with a view to making changes, improvements, and deletions before an outside agency ordered such a review.⁴³ Again, President Orze is pleased with the zero-based audit although it is not yet completed. He feels that progress is being made toward "excellence and integrity" at the university.⁴⁴

Because President Orze has been in office less than three years, it is impossible to predict the long-range effect of his programs. However, he is of the opinion that the resident enrollment on the Natchitoches campus is on the upswing, that the students are better prepared academically than they have been in the recent past, and that retention of students has improved. He also believes that Northwestern must support its strong programs such as nursing, rebuild some that have gone through troubled times such as education, and move in new directions with emphases on areas such as small business and agriculture and animal sciences.⁴⁵

Without a doubt, the most spectacular event of President Orze's administration was the university's centennial celebration of 1984. Throughout the year Natchitoches enjoyed many activities in the "Celebration of a Century."⁴⁶ The birthday

⁴⁰ *General Catalog, 1984-85*, 323-24.

⁴¹ Dr. Joseph J. Orze, interview with author, Natchitoches, Louisiana, October 15, 1984.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ The slogan "Celebration of a Century" was coined by Mrs. Mildred Lee of Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library.



Governor Edwin W. Edwards unveils Centennial Plaque



Centennial Women's Basketball Team — Gulf Star Conference Champions



Five first ladies cut Centennial cakes



Former President Arnold R. Kilpatrick greeted by President Joseph J. Orze at Centennial Extravaganza.



Centennial Extravaganza

celebration began in January with a Kick-Off Banquet featuring a normal school menu, birthday cake, live music, slides, and personal reminiscences.⁴⁷ In March the celebration continued with the Centennial Extravaganza in Prather Coliseum which was decorated as a garden and courtyard. Fine food, drinks, historical displays, slide shows, music and dancing filled the evening. The Extravaganza also launched a five-year Centennial Development Campaign, chaired by former president Arnold R. Kilpatrick.⁴⁸ In recognition of Northwestern's one hundred years, the Louisiana Historical Association's annual meeting and the annual Academic Honors Banquet were held in March 1984.⁴⁹ In July the Natchitoches Folk Festival was dedicated to education.⁵⁰

Throughout the year there were special displays on NSU's past in the Cammie G. Henry Room of the university library. One display prepared by Mrs. Mildred Lee, "Souvenirs of a Century," was a visual portrayal of the university's history.⁵¹ The culmination of the university's birthday celebration was Centennial Weekend in October which began with Governor Edwin W. Edwards's unveiling of a commemorative NSU Centennial plaque and formally dedicating the Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts.⁵² During his remarks, the governor pledged his continued support of NSU declaring, "Those pioneers (who founded NSU) will not be forgotten and the work they started will be continued."⁵³ The next day the Centennial Convocation featured Art Linkletter as guest speaker. The presidents of the university and student body, mayor of Natchitoches, representatives of the Board of Trustees for State Colleges and Universities and the Board of Regents, and the president of the Alumni Association made appropriate remarks. President Emeritus Arnold R. Kilpatrick dedicated a Centennial plaque during the convocation.⁵⁴ The next day which was NSU's 100th-year homecoming, United States Secretary of Education T.H. Bell addressed the Centennial Luncheon.⁵⁵ The day ended with the Demons' victory on the gridiron. The team under the new head coach, Sam Goodwin, ended the season as co-champions of the newly-formed Gulf Star Conference.⁵⁶

⁴⁷*The Natchitoches Times*, November 13, 1983; Northwestern State University of Louisiana, Kick-Off Banquet program, in possession of author.

⁴⁸*The Alumni Columns*, XXXX (Spring, 1984), 1; *ibid.*, XXXX (Summer, 1983), 3; *Current Sauce*, February 14, 1984.

⁴⁹Annual Meeting, Louisiana Historical Association, March 29-31, 1984, *Louisiana History Newsletter*, 10 (March 1984), 2; Phi Kappa Phi Banquet program in possession of author.

⁵⁰*The Alumni Columns*, XXXX (Spring, 1984), 11.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, XXXX (Winter, 1983), 14.

⁵²*Alexandria Daily Town Talk*, October 5, 1984; *The Natchitoches Times*, September 30, 1984.

⁵³*Alexandria Daily Town Talk*, October 5, 1984.

⁵⁴*The Natchitoches Times*, September 30, 1984; *Current Sauce*, October 2, 1984.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, October 2, 1984; *The Natchitoches Times*, September 30, 1984.

⁵⁶*Current Sauce*, November 13, 1984.

For one hundred years Northwestern State University, under various names, has continually provided Louisiana with education leadership and service. It has not been without problems and will not be without them in the future. However, the university's functions of teaching, research, and service will continue to be beacon lights in the lives of the people it touches. NSU's first one hundred years have been a foundation for a second century of even greater educational advancement and service to the people of Louisiana, the South, and the nation. It is with great optimism, renewed vitality, and dedicated commitment that Northwestern State University moves into its second century.



APPENDIX I

Name Changes of Northwestern State University of Louisiana

STATE NORMAL SCHOOL, 1884-1921. Created by Act 51 of the Regular Session of the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana, approved July 7, 1884.

LOUISIANA STATE NORMAL COLLEGE, 1921-1944. Changed by the Constitution of the State of Louisiana, adopted June 18, 1921.

NORTHWESTERN STATE COLLEGE OF LOUISIANA, 1944-1970. Changed by a constitutional amendment (Act 326 of the Regular Session of the Legislature of the State of Louisiana), approved by the Louisiana voters November 7, 1944.

NORTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA, 1970-. Changed by Act 31 of the Regular Session of the Legislature of the State of Louisiana, approved June 18, 1970.

APPENDIX II

Presidents of Northwestern State University of Louisiana

Edward E. Sheib, 1884-1888
Thomas D. Boyd, 1888-1896
Beverly C. Caldwell, 1896-1908
James B. Aswell, 1908-1911
Victor L. Roy, 1911-1929
William W. Tison, 1929-1934
Albert A. Fredericks, 1934-1941
Joe Farrar, 1941-1947

Joseph E. Gibson, 1947-1949
Garnie W. McGinty, 1949-1950
H. Lee Prather, 1950-1954
John S. Kyser, 1954-1966
Arnold R. Kilpatrick, 1966-1978
René J. Bienvenu, Jr., 1978-1982
Joseph J. Orze, 1982-

APPENDIX III

Selected List of Building Names Northwestern State University of Louisiana

Extant Buildings

<i>Building</i>	<i>Named In Honor Of</i>
Bienvenu Hall	René J. Bienvenu, Jr. President of Northwestern State University, 1978-1982
Bossier Hall	Bossier Parish
Caspari Hall	Leopold Caspari, State Representative and Senator, "Father of the Normal"
Caddo Hall	Caddo Parish
Easton Hall	Warren Easton, State Superintendent of Public Education, 1884-1888
Fournet Hall	Francis Gary Fournet, Head of Physics/Science/Physical Science Department, 1912-1955
Fredericks Fine Arts Center	Albert A. Fredericks, President of Louisiana State Normal College, 1934-1941
Iberville Hall	Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, founder and Governor of Louisiana, 1699
Kyser Hall	John S. Kyser, President of Northwestern State College, 1954-1966
Louisiana Hall	People of Louisiana
Natchitoches Hall	People of Natchitoches
Nesom Natatorium	Guy W. Nesom, Head of Health and Physical Education Department and Dean of the College of Education, 1964-1965
Noe Armory	James A. Noe, Governor of Louisiana, 1936
Prather Coliseum	H. Lee Prather, President of Northwestern State College, 1950-1954
Prudhomme Hall	Sieur Jean Baptiste Prud' homme and Prudhomme family, early settlers of Natchitoches
Rapides Hall	Rapides Parish
Roy Hall	Victor L. Roy, President of State Normal School (College), 1911-1929
Russell Hall	Scharlie Russell, head librarian, 1910-1940
Sabine Hall	Sabine Parish
St. Denis Hall	Louis Juchereau St. Denis, founder of Natchitoches, 1714
Turpin Stadium	Harry "Rags" Turpin, head football coach, 1934-1956
Varnado Hall	Dean Edwards Varnado, Dean of Women, 1915-1942

Watson Library

Williamson Hall

Eugene P. Watson, head librarian, 1940-1964
George C. Williamson, Professor of Biology 1897-1936

Non-extant Buildings

Agnes Morris Hall (razed)	Agnes Morris, Faculty member, 1892-1910, Director of Child Hygiene in State Department of Health
Audubon Hall (razed)	John James Audubon, 19th century ornithologist
Bienville Hall (burned, 1976)	Jean Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville, colonizer and Governor of Louisiana, 1702-1707, 1717-1724, 1732-1743
Boyd Hall (razed)	Thomas D. Boyd, President of State Normal School, 1888-1896
Bullard Hall (burned, 1981)	Bullard family
Caldwell Hall (burned, 1982)	Beverly C. Caldwell, President of State Normal School, 1896-1908
Carondelet Hall (razed)	Francisco Luis Hector, Baron de Carondelet, Governor of Louisiana, 1791-1797
Guardia Hall (burned, 1967)	Edward J. Guardia, first principal of grade school housed in building, member of faculty
Kate Chopin Hall (razed)	Kate Chopin, 19th century Louisiana author
Sheib Hall (razed)	Edward E. Sheib, President of State Normal School, 1884-1888

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In researching the history of Northwestern State University of Louisiana the author has made extensive use of the impressive University Archives housed in the Archives Division of the Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library. Containing the catalogued papers of presidents Edward E. Sheib, Beverly C. Caldwell, Victor L. Roy, Albert A. Fredericks, Joe Farrar, and John S. Kyser and the uncatalogued papers of presidents Joe Farrar, Joseph E. Gibson, Garnie W. McGinty, H. Lee Prather, and John S. Kyser, the University Archives yielded a wealth of material on every aspect of the institution and, to a lesser extent, on Natchitoches and Louisiana. (Most, or in some cases all, of the papers of presidents Arnold R. Kilpatrick, René J. Bienvenu, and Joseph J. Orze are active records that will be released to the Archives Division when they are no longer needed.) The minutes of the Board of Administrators are also located in the University Archives. The establishment of the University Archives was due largely to the work of two individuals: E. Loneta Graves who preserved the records before their deposit in the library and President Arnold R. Kilpatrick who approved the inclusion of the archives division in the new library. In addition to the University Archives, the Archives Division houses many private collections which provided invaluable information on the university's operation and life. In the listing of primary works, all of the manuscript collections cited are housed in the university's Archives Division. Other primary works contributed to a comprehensive biography of Northwestern and to an understanding of the history of higher education in Louisiana. The university's early *Biennial Reports* contained a gold mine of information not only on curricula and budgets but also on social and cultural history. The university's *Catalogs*, *Potpourri*, *Alumni Columns*, and *Current Sauce* provided interesting details and a visual portrayal of the Northwestern community throughout the years. The *Biennial Reports* of the state superintendents of education and the *Official Proceedings of the State Board of Education* presented a perspective of Northwestern's role in Louisiana's higher education system and the administration of the university from Baton Rouge. A meaningful theme found in all the primary records was the interplay of education and politics in Louisiana. Since many of the records of the contemporary period are still working records and not available for persual, personal interviews were an important source of information for the last thirty years. Newspapers, throughout the years, presented Northwestern to the public and thus influenced the image of the university. (Note: Various research materials collected by the author during the research and writing of this volume are deposited in the Archives Division, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library.)

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